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## PORTRAITS AND PAMPHLETS









KARL RADEK

# PORTRAITS AND PAMPHLETS

*by*

KARL RADEK

*With an introduction by*

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LONDON  
WISHART BOOKS LTD.

1935

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
BY WESTERN PRINTING SERVICES LTD., BRISTOL

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# KARL RADEK

by

A. J. Cummings

IN some respects Karl Bernardovitch Radek is the most remarkable figure in post-revolutionary Russia. In a land where free journalism in the Western sense is impossible he is certainly pre-eminent in his profession. In any country in the world he would establish himself without undue effort as a writer of the first order.

What makes him so valuable to the Soviet Union as its foremost propagandist in the Press is the vigour and picturesqueness of his mind and his ability to infuse life into the appalling dreariness of reiterated Soviet slogans.

As one of the editors of *Izvestia* and a leading writer of *Pravda*—State and Party newspapers with circulations beside which those of popular English dailies are relatively small—he enjoys the special confidence of the Kremlin and unusual liberty in his modes of expression. This confidence is well justified, for he rarely makes a blunder or a slip in putting the official case or making the appropriate comment on foreign and internal affairs.

He has in fact to the nth degree the expert journalist's peculiar sensitiveness to the subtle variations of tone in 'his master's voice' and to all the possible reactions among the many official critics ever on the alert to detect an error of judgment in the presentation of Soviet ideological themes.

Radek keeps his ear closely to the ground; and even when he seems to be writing with complete personal candour or passing an unqualified judgment upon any point of Soviet policy, or upon any individual action by some highly placed State official, you may be sure that Radek has fully surveyed



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the field and that he knows more than approximately what is actually passing in the minds of those who direct policy from the higher altitudes.

While the translations in this volume of a tiny fraction of his work do not of course give the full flavour of his distinguished and witty style, they nevertheless seem to me to suggest the skill with which, whatever subject is dealt with, he insinuates the ever-recurring theme of Russian Socialism in the form authoritatively prescribed.

Radek is fifty years of age—the age which an eminent contemporary of his in the Soviet Government once assured me marked the limit of life for most of the Russian pre-war revolutionaries who have now come into their own as leading administrators of the country in which they once carried their lives in their hands. At fifty, it would seem, the human machine of the professional revolutionary tends to break down. This view receives some justification in the long list of well-known figures in the Soviet State who in recent years have died or dropped out through permanent ill-health at round about fifty.

Radek is still going strong; apparently there is no reason why he should not live to a ripe old age. Possibly in his case the mechanism is in better trim because it has not been subjected to the same harsh stresses that many of the other Russian revolutionaries had to endure.

Radek is not a Russian. He is a Polish Jew. He does not forget his native land. In a recent article on 'My Country'—published I think in *Izvestia*—he wrote:

Why *my* country? I was not born by the Volga, nor in the mountainous Caucasus, nor on the plains of Siberia. When a landscape appears to me in a dream, it is the hills of two villages that I see. Last year, when on the way from Mekhov I arrived in Cracow one evening and saw the setting of the sun, it seemed to me that there was no more beautiful spot on earth. And the songs my mother used to sing to me were not about the little grey goat that once upon a time

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lived with grandmother, but about the grey Vistula that flowed far out to sea. And when my memory brings back images, they are not the images of Pushkin but of Mickiewicz. And when I wish to speak words of endearment to a beloved woman it is Polish words that come to my lips.

'But,' he is pointedly careful to add, 'whenever I thought of revolutionary matters I used to think in German, because it was in the German workers' movement that I gained my spurs.'

He has made quite sure that no political enemy shall twit him effectually with his foreign origin and that there shall be no doubt as to what he means when he now becomes lyrical over 'my country.' 'In 1920,' he goes on to say, 'when I crossed the Polish-Soviet front,

I happened to spend several days at Luninetz with the Polish General Staff. The young officers crowded about me. They were curious to know why I, a Pole, should be "serving the muscovites." They imagined, at first, that I had become Russianized; but they were soon convinced, alas, that my Russian was worse than that of many of their own number who had been educated in Russian schools. I tried to make them understand that our country was the humanity which was seeking to liberate itself from the old tsarist empire, and that in future it would be the whole world. "You are in love with a dream, not a living country," the young Polish officers said.

'And now my country is no longer a dream. She is the greatest world anthill, the greatest building in the making. She is Life, from the Berezina to the Pacific Ocean, from the White Sea to the Black Sea, under one banner, under one leadership and with one will. My country has children who speak in a hundred different languages. That is why I, who speak many languages badly, am not ashamed to love and praise her in a faltering tongue.

'Polish landscapes do not prevent me from loving you, my country, in the languages of Mickiewicz and Goethe; from loving you as the least of the shepherds of the Chuvash people, who have been taught to think like men by the Soviet Government; nay, from loving you more deeply than they, because I love you for the sake of all who have perished in many lands and ages fighting for you and never seeing you.'

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Commentators on Radek's career are fond of describing him as a man of mystery. I do not think his early career is any more mysterious than that of any other person who has come into political prominence in Eastern Europe since the War. From the age of fourteen he has been connected with various workers' movements—first in Galicia and then as a spirited member of the Polish Social-Democratic Party.

He was educated in Cracow, Vienna and Berne; and at twenty he became editor of the Social-Democratic organ the *Red Flag*, in Warsaw. From 1908 he was an active member of the Left Wing of the German Social-Democratic Party, and worked on several of its newspapers, specializing on international affairs. Just before starting his activities in Germany, where he remained until 1914, he had been obliged to leave Russia owing to the unpleasant attentions of the tsarist police.

When war broke out he was called up to the Austrian army but deserted in 1915, taking refuge in Switzerland and writing a series of bitter articles in the Swiss Press under the name of 'Parabellum.' Like Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg he opposed the war with passionate insistence.

On the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia he went first to Sweden, where he established himself as the official representative of the Bolshevik Party; and in November, 1917, he went to Petrograd, entered the Bolshevik Foreign Office and began at once a series of brilliant propagandist articles in *Izvestia* under the name of 'Viator.' In 1918 he was a fierce opponent of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. When the German Revolution began in November, 1918, he returned to Germany and was invited by the Berlin Executive Committee to take part with Joffe, Rakovsky and Bukharin as representatives of the Russian Soviets in a conference at Berlin. The delegates were, however, intercepted at Vilna at the instance of the German Government, and only Radek succeeded in getting through to Berlin. Here,

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under the name of Sobelsohn he managed to keep his incognito and busied himself with Spartacist propaganda.

It was stated erroneously at the time that he had five million roubles at his disposal and that he was in financial control of a communist paper in Vienna. The five million roubles were fabricated in the fear and hatred of foreign commentators. Finally he was arrested and sent to prison by the German authorities nominally on a charge of registering under a false name and obtaining a false passport, but in reality on account of his activities on behalf of the communist movement.

After six months of solitary confinement all charges were withdrawn and in December, 1919, he was released and expelled from Germany.

Immediately before and after his release he gave interviews to two English newspapers indicating very clearly what he regarded as the Bolshevik objective. Before he was actually released he said suavely to a representative of the *Daily Herald*: 'We do not expect Soviet rule in England at once. It is a long way to Tipperary; and British Labour will find its own solution to its own problems.'

At that time he was undoubtedly regarded in capitalist countries as one of the most dangerous of the Russian revolutionaries thrown up by the volcanic eruption of the Great War. His intellectual brilliance, his satirical gifts, and his untiring industry gave him an unrivalled position as an expositor of Bolshevik policy and a destructive critic of capitalist philosophy. Western politicians attacked him even more violently than Lenin. They actually went so far as to describe him not only as Lenin's most formidable lieutenant but as the man who supplied Lenin with his most original and terrifying ideas.

As Director-General of Propaganda he was perhaps the fourth most important man in Russia and had a good deal to do with establishing the policy of the Third International. He showed more skill and singleness of purpose and more

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understanding of British psychology than any of his colleagues in the ferocious campaign which he conducted against Great Britain, culminating in the so-called Congress of Baku held in the late summer of 1920.

An amusing personal sketch which appeared in *The Times* in 1918 spoke of Radek as the real virtuoso of the Bolshevik movement, and of course as an 'unscrupulous adventurer.' 'In happier circumstances,' it was said, 'he might possibly have been induced to employ his Machiavellian talents in a different cause; but to-day, as a rebel against society, he has sought that refuge and hospitality which the Bolsheviks willingly accord, without regard to the past, to all men of ability who join their ranks.'

His personal appearance was thus described: 'He presents an almost grotesque figure. A little man, with a huge head, protruding ears, clean-shaven face, with spectacles, and a large mouth with yellow tobacco-stained teeth from which a huge pipe or cigar is never absent, Radek is generally dressed in a quaint, drab-coloured Norfolk suit with knickers and leggings. As he jaunts from the Dom Sovietov to his office, an English cap on his head, his pipe puffing fiercely, a revolver strapped to his side and a bundle of books under his arm, he looks like a cross between a bandit and a professor.'

Indeed (the same benign observer goes on to say) unkind people might well take this to be the truest description of his character.

It was said that at Brest during the discussions between the Russian negotiators and the German conquerors, he took an immense delight in puffing the smoke of his cheroot into General Hoffmann's face until the Germans gravely objected to 'the presence of an Austrian deserter in the Russian delegation.'

In recent years Radek has become less of a monster, both in the physical and spiritual sense, to the British imagination; and most intelligent visitors from this country who have

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talked to him in Moscow have come away impressed alike with his personality and his political realism.

Mr Robert Boothby, a Conservative Member of Parliament who spent some weeks in Russia in 1926, has given a very entertaining account of an interview he had in the Kremlin with Radek which he describes as the most vivid of all his 'astounding experiences in Moscow.' Radek, though a Jew, did not, he said, look like a Jew. He was small and tough, wore large spectacles and had a curious fringe of beard which gave him an unforgettable appearance.

His first words to Mr Boothby were characteristic of the man. 'Allow me to congratulate you on your courage in coming to the country where we eat our young,' he remarked genially, sweeping the English politician with a wave of his arm into a comfortable chair and handing him a cigar.

Then began a *séance* of which Mr Boothby gives in retrospect in the *Spectator* a delightful picture:

'Pacing up and down the room and puffing large quantities of smoke from his cigar, Radek held forth for the best part of an hour upon every conceivable aspect of world politics. He spoke English with an accent but with great fluency and at a speed that took one's breath away—and fortunately his own now and then, for it was the only thing that made him pause for a second. Occasionally he would abandon his pacing and sink into an arm-chair, brandishing a forefinger in my face in order to emphasize a particular point. I confined myself to suggesting subjects (there was none upon which he was not prepared to express a discursive and dogmatic opinion) and shunting him at intervals from one to another.'

Mr Boothby tells me that he had an even more amusing interview with Radek last April. 'I found him,' he says, 'at the top of that immense new building opposite the Kremlin next our Embassy, lying in bed, smoking innumerable pipes, looking more than ever like a mischievous monkey, and surrounded by every newspaper published in the world. He regaled me with great brilliance for an hour and a half on an

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endless variety of subjects and said *inter alia* and ironically that he would rather be cut off from the Russian Secret Service reports than from the British Press.\*

‘Unlike you,’ Mr. Boothby added, ‘he has a profound admiration for the British Conservative Party. We shall be the last,’ he assured me, ‘to go down.’

Before he left Moscow on the former occasion, Mr. Boothby met Radek once again in the Kremlin at the height of the General Strike in England.

‘If you are a serious student of politics you should go home at once,’ Radek cried. ‘It is more interesting now there than here. But make no mistake. This is not a revolutionary movement. It is simply a wage dispute. And I have instructed our Press to keep calm.’

I have since been assured with considerable solemnity that what Radek actually said was not ‘I have instructed our Press to keep calm,’ but ‘I think our Press ought to keep calm.’

Calmness was, if I remember aright, scarcely the word to characterize the comments which were appearing then in the Russian Press. But Radek’s observation revealed his astute understanding of the situation and of the British people.

At that time I was in Cairo and paid a visit to Zaghlul Pasha, who was ill in bed. The old man greeted me with a malicious smile and this remark: ‘Instead of coming here, young man, to ask me about the condition of Egypt you should be at home in England taking note of the revolution which is about to break out there.’

Radek knew better than Zaghlul.

From December 1919, to 1924, Radek worked actively and ceaselessly in different departments of the Comintern.

In 1924 he made the one serious error of judgment in his Soviet career by joining the Trotsky Opposition which doubted the power of the Soviets to carry the revolution to

\* It is only fair to say that Radek, who appears to be sensitive about his jests, declares his complete innocence of this little witticism.

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its logical dénouement. In 1927, on account of this attachment to the cause of the now vanquished Trotsky, he was expelled from the Communist Party. But he was too clever as well as too useful to the Party to share Trotsky's fate.

In the summer of 1928, together with Smilga and Preobrazhensky, he wrote a letter to the Central Executive Committee humbly admitting his error and stating that he had deserted the Trotskyists. He was thereupon re-established as a member of the Party.

It will be noticed that in the first of his essays in *Portraits and Pamphlets*, Radek, tracing the course of this controversy, reflects in repentant mood upon his own share in it and goes on to explain how he, Radek,

'based his argument on a schematic conception of the internationalism of the labour movement; on the theory that the separate national units could not independently solve basic problems of the proletarian revolution because severally they were too weak as compared with international capital.

Just as in Shchedrin's story tsarism discovered and destroyed the provincial hot-bed of liberalism so, thought Radek, international capital would inevitably destroy the heart of socialism in the U.S.S.R. unless international revolution came to its assistance in time. To Radek in this mood of dangerous aberration the building of socialism in a single country seemed as ridiculous as the idea once ridiculed by Shchedrin, the idea of a benevolent Government establishing liberalism in a single district of tsarist Russia.

This is now all past history. Radek has been reinstated as the first and the best Soviet publicist. He has always been close to the formulators of Soviet foreign policy. Not only was he Lenin's intimate disciple on foreign affairs, but he now has the ear of Stalin on important occasions.

Because of the influence he is able to exercise in the Kremlin, Radek has conducted unofficially numerous impor-



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tant diplomatic conversations. Because he is unofficial he can sometimes do much more than an official. At any rate nothing in Soviet foreign politics is unknown to him.

He is also an authority on foreign fiction and has written dramatic criticism. His capacity for work is enormous. He reads most of the Press of the world. His room, of which it is said his wife despairs, is always piled high with the publications of New Zealand, Germany, the Argentine, Shanghai, Poland, France, Britain, South America and other areas of the world. Now he is studying Japan from the best inside sources: which means not only that he is studying Japanese newspapers and magazines and talking to numberless Japanese but also that he is reading old and new Japanese fiction and delving into ancient Japanese history. His essay in this volume on Hideyoshi, the famous Japanese military leader of the sixteenth century, is a convincing example of the thoroughness of his historical researches. A few years ago, when China was foremost in Soviet foreign interest, Radek became Moscow's chief authority on that vast country.

He speaks readily several languages. He is an epigrammatic and copious writer. One of his acquaintances told me a few days ago that he can turn out a lively, informative and well-written article at a moment's notice on practically any subject under the sun. He is a scintillating conversationalist, quick, forceful, full of apt allusions and adorable anecdotes and with a biting wit. All the jests and anecdotes that circulate to-day in Moscow are attributed to him, although he cannot, I suppose, be responsible for more than eighty-five per cent. of them.

There is no doubt at all of Radek's passionate devotion to the well-being of the Soviet Union and the whole Soviet philosophy. His uncompromising faith in the Revolution; his ruthless contempt for bourgeois and social-democratic weaklings; his refusal to show mercy to men and institutions outside the Soviet ideal; and his cheerfully confessed

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acceptance of the familiar view so convenient to the authors of revolutionary violence, that the end justifies the means—all these are characteristics not difficult to discover in this extraordinarily interesting collection of his writings.

I hope Karl Radek will live long and prosper mightily: if for no other reason than that he, more than any other Soviet writer, has imparted colour and vivacity to the large and somewhat arid field of Soviet propaganda.

It may indeed be due in some measure to Radek's journalistic influence that recent efforts of the Soviet Government to impress foreign opinion with the magnitude of its achievements in industrial planning are so much less unconvincing than earlier crude attempts to justify the so-called Russian "experiment" before the world.

Sovietists of my acquaintance have never been able altogether to dissemble their irritation when I have derided or criticised the more dismal characteristics of their methods of propaganda. But the official propagandists are learning from experience that in Great Britain at all events we are interested in the social and economic facts consequent upon the Russian Revolution rather than in what might be called its grim ideological urge. Much of the literature now issued to British tourists, the wireless broadcasts in English from Moscow and the admirably produced books illustrating various aspects of life and work in the Soviet Union are all examples of legitimate and realistic propaganda.

The functions performed by Radek are of course of a higher order. In the past few months events have modified profoundly the relationships of the great "capitalist" countries with the Soviet State. The Soviets have proved beyond any reasonable doubt not only the stability of their regime, but their capacity, in face of an incredulous world, to carry into effect a large part of their gigantic economic conceptions. They have also made abundantly clear their intention to keep the peace and their desire to organise an

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international peace system. The entrance of Russia into the League of Nations, more even than her series of agreements with individual states, marks a turning-point in European history.

Writers of the status and capacity of Radek can be of great service not only to their own country but to the world at large. The more Radek and his colleagues of the Soviet Press are able to write on the assumption that other nations now take the new Russia for granted the more surely will other nations take the new Russia for granted. It should be within the power of such spokesmen by their honesty and candour to encourage the growth of a friendlier understanding in Great Britain and elsewhere and a more ungrudging recognition of Russia's assured place in the sun.

# I

## STALIN

### THE ARCHITECT OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY

#### *NOTE*

[We mostly see only what we have been trained to see by upbringing, environment and habit. Thus the average British reader of Radek's paper on Stalin is, until he gives it more thought, bound to be inclined to see hero-worship, and to be quite blind to what Radek really is about. But as this paper on Stalin turns on the essential harmony between communism and individuality—on the way the one necessitates and breeds the other—it is worth while drawing attention to the basic feature of the Marxist-Leninist Party, ignorance or misunderstanding of which leads to the rather comical confusion made by the average non-Marxist student of the civilization of the future.

We can get at it through the malicious way in which the well-drilled capitalist Press hails any public admission of previous error by leading communists as 'repentance' or boot-licking. The point in these confessions of error which is missed is that communism is scientific politics, a new form of politics which is not dependent on individual 'intuition' or 'instinct' or 'genius.' It is for example as silly to speak of Radek's public admission of his early 'left' communist errors as 'repentance' as it would be to speak of the 'repentance' of a physicist who admits the error of some previous method he had employed to examine atomic structure.

Further it cannot be made too clear that this Marxist

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non-individualist scientific approach to social problems does not stultify individual life. On the contrary, it demands ceaseless individual vigilance, criticism and self-criticism, testing and revision of the Party policy and of one's personal application of that commonly agreed policy. Such is the nature of Marxism. It demands more, not less, individuality. And it follows that since the 'man at the top' owes his position not to any 'personal magnetism' or sex appeal, but to the very same qualities which make a great leader of science, plus tested personal courage, it makes possible really honest praise of a great man, a praise which is the very opposite to hero-worship.

There is the apparent paradox: its understanding is one of the indispensable keys to the constructive forces in the world of to-day. A. B.]

## STALIN

*The ninth of a series of lectures on 'The History of the Victory of Socialism,' delivered in 1967 at the School of Interplanetary Communications on the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution.*

FELLOW CO-OPERATORS:—\*

In our last lecture we left off where the world was shocked by the news of the premature death of our great teacher and leader, Lenin, where on the shoulders of his friends his remains were borne through the ranks of sorrowing millions to the Hall of Columns, where for many days they were an object of pilgrimage for the workers and peasants of our great country and of the whole world.

There still resounded through the air the vow pronounced by Stalin, the General Secretary of the Party, in the State Opera House—words hewn from granite—that the Party would remain faithful to Lenin's legacy of the struggle against capitalism, that it would carry on the struggle to a victorious end, by relying on the solidarity of the international proletariat, on the firm alliance of workers and peasants, by strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat, by guarding the unity of the Leninist ranks as a most precious treasure.

The news of Lenin's death caused a mass influx of workers

\* All modes of salutation in the period of struggle for socialism bore traces of the commodity system or even of preceding social systems. The Russian word for 'comrade' (in Russian *tovarishch*) is connected with *tovar* (burden), the German *Genosse* comes from *geniessen*—to consume together; the English 'comrade' comes from the French *camarade*, which in turn comes from the Spanish *camarada*, meaning one who shares your room with you. In the period of the final victory of socialism these words gave way in Russian to the word *sotvoretz* (co-creator), in foreign tongues 'co-operator,' from the Latin word *cooperare*, to act or work together.

Thus the word 'co-operator,' which, in the period of the Second International had a commercial connotation, has had its original meaning given back to it, that in which it was used by the great Utopian socialist Robert Owen when he proposed that workers should themselves organize their labour co-operatively as a means of superseding capitalism.

into the ranks of the Party. The desire of the proletariat was to replace the great brain that had ceased to create and the great heart that had ceased to beat, by collective effort, by the work of millions of brains and hearts.

In the ranks of the world bourgeoisie Lenin's death called forth rejoicing. The bourgeoisie did not understand the significance of the Party created by Lenin; it did not believe that from among Lenin's followers a leader would arise able to combine the daring of a great rebel with the cool calculation of a mathematician. After all, no previous revolution had produced a new leader to take the place of one who had died or perished. Previous leaders had been followed by miserable imitations. The bourgeoisie did not realize that this was a result of the bourgeois character of former revolutions. Bourgeois revolutions achieved their goal in the short period of action of a single historical generation. Heroic fighters were followed by petty traders who turned great historical achievements into petty cash. For final victory the world communist revolution demands the heroic deeds of many generations of fighters. That is why, as it rouses one section of the proletariat after another to the fight, it produces detachment after detachment of great leaders.

The bourgeoisie would not and could not endure the thought of socialism winning in the U.S.S.R. It hoped that the contradictions of the New Economic Policy would break up the proletarian Party, that on the basis of this disintegration conflicts among the leaders would arise and that the sword raised by Lenin against world capital would break. But it was mistaken. The post-Lenin period was the period of the building of socialist society in the U.S.S.R., of its triumphant defence against the attacks of a number of imperialist powers, and of the victory of socialism in a number of countries.

To-day we shall deal with the first decade following Lenin's death, a decade in which the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. and its

Leninist Party under the leadership of Stalin laid the foundations of socialist economy and prepared the proletariat for the great international battles which later secured the final victory of socialism.

To-day, half a century after these decisive events in the history of mankind, everything seems to have been so simple, so self-evident. Rosa Luxemburg used to say that nothing seemed so impossible as a revolution which had not yet won and nothing so simple and understandable as one that had.

You may ask: What is there wonderful in the fact that, after having overthrown the bourgeoisie, after having defended the Soviet State from intervention, after having in the main re-established industry and agriculture at the pre-war level, the Soviet proletariat went on to lay the foundations of socialism? What other task could it have undertaken? You may say that the accomplishment of this task was of course a great historical achievement, but did not demand anything qualitatively new, either from the proletariat or from its leaders. But this is a fundamental mistake you must dismiss from your minds if you wish to grasp all the greatness of the Stalin period, the period of the building of socialist society—if you desire to grasp the greatness of the work accomplished by the proletariat in those years, or the historical greatness of Lenin's successor, Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin.

It is true that the Stalin period was firmly based upon the Lenin period, was its continuation. Stalin was executor of the will of Lenin; he did not wish to be, nor could he have been, anything else, as Lenin had drawn up the programme of work for the whole period of the destruction of capitalism and the building of socialism. But in order to carry out Lenin's will, Stalin and the Party had to make independent decisions equal in daring to those of Lenin. They had to develop Lenin's teaching independently, in the same way that Lenin developed the teachings of Marx. The Soviet proletariat had once again to soar on the wings of a great



enthusiasm to Octobrian heights, and fan higher and higher the flames of the world conflagration.

SOCIALISM—TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Even before the end of the world war—in the autumn of 1916—in an article on 'The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution,' Lenin wrote:

'Capitalism develops at all possible speeds in various countries. *It could not be otherwise under commodity production.* Whence the inexorable deduction that *socialism cannot win simultaneously in all countries. It will win first in one or a number of countries*, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This will be found not only to cause friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of those other countries to crush the victorious proletariat in the socialist country. Under such conditions a war waged by us would be a legitimate and just war' (*Lenin, Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, 'The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution.' My italics.—Radek.).

Lenin made quite clear what he meant by the victory of socialism in a single country. He did not mean by that merely the seizure of power by the proletariat. To prove the necessity for a victory of socialism in a single country, he wrote in another place:

'The victorious proletariat of that country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized socialist production at home, would rise against the rest of the capitalist world, attracting the oppressed classes of other countries, raising among them revolts against the capitalists, launching, in case of necessity, armed forces against the exploiting classes and their states' (*Lenin, Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, 'The United States of Europe' Slogan, p. 272).

Lenin understood the victory of socialism to mean the organization of socialist society. That the organization of socialist production was possible in the U.S.S.R., that

neither the cultural backwardness of the country nor the predominance of the peasantry in it were insuperable obstacles, Lenin most emphatically pointed out in the last articles he wrote before his death, declaring that in the U.S.S.R. there is 'all and sufficient of the essentials for this construction.'

But despite these unquestionable statements of Lenin's, the question of the possibility of building socialism in one country became the centre of the struggle which shook the Party after his death. This thesis of Lenin was disputed not only by Trotsky, who came to us from Menshevism and when he joined the Bolshevik Party remained in fact a semi-Menshevik, and held that the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia could be no more than a temporary result of fortune which would disappear unless a victorious Western proletariat came to its assistance in time. In this Trotsky based his argument on the typical Second International point of view, expressed by him in 1903 at the Second Congress of our Party, that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is the power of an organized proletariat representative of the *majority of the nation!* According to Trotsky, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in a country in which the proletariat does not represent the majority of the population could only be an episode in history if it had to rely only upon its own strength. No wonder then that in his opinion the Dictatorship of the Proletariat could not set itself the task of building a socialist society.

Radek too (then a follower of Rosa Luxemburg) found the building of socialism in a single country just as ridiculous as Shchedrin found the notion of a benevolent governor establishing liberalism in a single district of tsarist Russia. Radek based his argument on a schematic conception of the international nature of the labour movement, holding that separate national units could not solve the basic problems of the proletarian revolution independently because they were too weak

as compared with international capital. Just as in Shchedrin's story, tsarism 'discovered' and destroyed the provincial hot-bed of liberalism, so, thought Radek, international capital would inevitably destroy the socialist home in the U.S.S.R. unless world revolution came to its assistance in time.

But even Zinoviev and Kameniev, who considered themselves trustees of Lenin's will (notwithstanding the fact that they had fought against him in the decisive days of October) did not understand that this very possibility of building socialism in a single country was the *Archimedian fulcrum in Lenin's strategy*. The very backbone of Lenin's plan seemed to them to be an idiosyncrasy of Stalin's and they declared that the very plan on which Lenin had based his strategy for securing the international victory of socialism was in fact a desertion of the international tasks of the October revolution.

The opposition to Stalin unfurled the Leninist banner, of socialist building being the task of the October revolution, and produced the most varied arguments, which were perhaps partly responsible for their failure to grasp the real character of their own position. In fact this was an echo of the Second International with its disbelief in socialism. This matter is worthy of your special attention because here appears all the greatness of Stalin as the successor of Marx and Lenin—his greatness as theoretician of Marxism-Leninism, and leader of the proletarian revolution, and all the greatness of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as instrument for the triumph of socialism.

Prior to 1917 the international proletariat had not yet begun the direct struggle for the seizure of power and the realization of socialism. Right up to October the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat had been no more than attempts to switch democratic revolutions on to the tract of the struggle for socialism; historically, advance skirmishes. These attempts did not bring the proletariat to victory. The Second International could not even cherish the memory of

those great heroic attempts and make them life-giving springs of belief in socialism. In the hands of the leaders of the Second International the banner of socialism became a smoke-screen for the racket of the labour aristocracy's personal struggle for betterment, for their climb into the world of bourgeois culture. And there is no need to dwell on the way every scoundrel who wanted to get a lift up on the shoulders of the people to the plums of government office waved the flag of 'radical' or of 'Christian' or of 'reformist' socialism—names which in many countries have become nothing more than a means of fooling the people.

But yet, were the 'sincere' and 'honest' leaders of the Second International so very far from this conception of socialism when in spite of professing to swear by socialism, they did nothing to prepare the working class for proletarian revolution? By not preparing the workers for the revolutionary strategy of Marx, they only proved that for them socialism was a far away 'island of Utopia,' at best a dream which might come true centuries ahead. The Kautskys and Guesdes professed to look down with contempt on pettifogging reformism and on the careerists dreaming of ministerial posts, but actually they were bone of their bone, because any real struggle for socialism was just as foreign to them. The Russian Mensheviks sneered at the European reformists, only themselves to be proved to be mere toadies of the bourgeoisie—its first line in the struggle against the proletariat. Arguing that the cultural backwardness of Russia did not permit of the victory of socialist revolution, which was possible only in countries with developed capitalism, they had only one thing to say: 'You will get no farther than a bourgeois republic with reformist ministers.' When history confronted them with the point-blank possibility of socialism in the whole of Europe, the leaders of the Second International, even in those countries which the Russian Mensheviks had considered to be ripe for socialism, proved themselves ripe for no more than counter-

revolution. The Dans, the Martovs, the Adlers, the Bauers, the Scheidemanns, the Kautskys, turned out to have one role in history: they were 'fighters' for the crumbs falling from the bourgeois table.

The idea that it was impossible to build socialism in Russia alone turned out to be merely a disguised middle-class complete disbelief in socialism as a historically mature and practically possible task. Trotsky, by 'proving,' for the benefit of international imperialism, which was preparing to attack the U.S.S.R., that the triumphant proletariat of the first socialist country was doomed by history to weave ropes of sand, that it was powerless alone to overcome even its internal class enemies, revealed the true nature of his own standpoint. Despite all his 'left' phrases his standpoint did not differ in any way from that of the Dans and the Scheidemanns. Like the whole of the Second International, Trotsky, the Menshevik, capitulated before imperialism. As the second round of revolutions and wars began he made his report to international capitalism: 'Your realm stands firm, socialism is a Utopia.'

The opposition to the idea set out by Lenin as early as 1902, in his debate with Plekhanov—that, even if the minority, the proletariat could win, provided it succeeded in supporting the proletarian revolution by a peasant war—the opposition to the idea that it was possible to build socialism in a single country, was in fact a result of general scepticism as to the possibility of a victorious socialist revolution at the present historical stage. If, as the Trotskyists used to argue, the proletariat was unable to build socialism in the U.S.S.R., and in the West the revolutionary forces were only just beginning to form, the logical inference was that the hour of the socialist revolution had not yet come.

Those Bolsheviks who declared Stalin's programme for socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. to be a purely Stalin idiosyncrasy, a Utopia, even an abandonment of the inter-

national tasks of the revolution, were in reality declaring a belief that capitalism was as yet an uncompleted stage of development, even in the U.S.S.R., and proposing to postpone the construction of socialism. Under the guise of advocacy of internationalism, they proposed abandonment by the Soviet proletariat of its international task—the task of aiding the birth of the international proletarian revolution by the victorious construction of socialism in the U.S.S.R., by building there a classless socialist society. The opposition gave up the first-born rights of the Soviet proletariat as pioneers of socialism, and offered the difficult task of building socialism to our ‘elder brothers.’

By this step the opposition was rejecting the very spirit of Lenin’s Party. In distinction from all the parties of the Second International the Party of the Bolsheviks was created by Lenin for the fight for socialism. It never forgot its socialist tasks in the period of bourgeois-democratic revolution, which it considered merely to be a stage in the struggle for socialism. The Party of Lenin—pioneer of the international proletarian revolution—could not follow those who within its ranks stood for remnants of the prejudices of the Second International. The Party followed Stalin and his comrades-in-arms, because by raising the question of realizing Lenin’s teaching regarding the construction of socialism in the U.S.S.R., he continued the task for which Lenin created the Party. Stalin became the leader of the Party because he showed the way to continue the struggle to carry on Lenin’s task. Now that it had seized power, defended itself from intervention, and had consolidated its forces, the proletariat was to begin to build class-free society. Socialism which thanks to Marx had turned from a Utopia into a science, under the leadership of Lenin, led the proletariat to the struggle for power. Having seized power and fortified it economically under the leadership of Stalin, the proletariat began work on the realization of socialism.

Stalin worked out Lenin's teaching of the unequal development of capitalism as premise for the teaching of the possibility of building socialism in a single country. This alone would be sufficient ground on which to base the historical significance of Stalin as Lenin's successor. But to his great merit of working out Lenin's strategical plan, Stalin added another: he put that plan into practice, he utilized Lenin's strategy in great historical battles. Thus he not only led the proletariat into battle for the fulfilment of what might be termed the national tasks of the October Revolution, but also built up a socialist fortress for the international proletariat, a fortress which will facilitate the international victory of socialism. In this way Stalin became the great architect of socialism.

Before going on to describe the struggles for the realization of Lenin's plan, which have united the name of Stalin to that of Lenin for all time, we must, however briefly, explain why after Lenin's death it was precisely Stalin on whom history called to take the helm and pilot the proud ship of Leninism through storm and stress.

#### A SWORD FORGED IN THE FIRE OF REVOLUTION

It is extremely difficult to get any concrete notion of the personal origins of great men of history. How are we to explain why the son of a Simbirsk school-inspector and a doctor's daughter should rouse the Russian proletariat against international imperialism and become a symbol of the international socialist revolution? Despite the progress of science in our communist society we are yet unable to explain this riddle of personality. Science can only reveal the social conditions which nurtured the leader who marched ahead of mankind lighting the way like a pillar of fire.

The social conditions which made Stalin the man whose name we see inscribed in the book of history of working-class emancipation can be summed up by saying that he more than

any other disciple of Lenin was cast in the mould of the Leninist Party, bone of its bone, blood of its blood.

He was a child of want, who rebelled against the slavery of an ecclesiastical seminary, who from early youth was a thirsty student of the algebra of revolution, and who clearly understood that its main moving force, its sole leader, could only be the proletariat. In little petty-middle-class Georgia he began working at getting workers together, at freeing them from all manners of petty-middle-class groups then in the field, not only as 'socialists,' but even as 'Marxists.' In Georgia there were very few industrial workers, relatively much fewer even than in Russia, and the task of getting them to lead the revolution seemed Utopian. But Stalin thoroughly assimilated the teaching of Marx that the proletariat is the Demiurge of our present history, and he devoted all his strength to it, since only this way could the victory of the revolution be guaranteed. The fulfilment of this task demanded uncompromising struggle against opportunism. Young Stalin became steeled in the tireless struggle against the scores of shades of the petty-middle-class movement—from anarchism to nationalist 'socialism' and menshevism. This youthful schooling left its trace on him for ever. From that time one of the basic features of Stalin as a leader has been his great rigour in attacking fundamental problems. Once he has felt his way to a real solution of a problem, whatever the difficulties he fights for that solution with the greatest possible persistence. And no roseate prospect of easy victory along some other path which does not guarantee a complete solution can divert him from his main task. The second fruit that he acquired in those first battles in Georgia was his great vigilance in regard to opportunism. No matter how well disguised, no matter in what wonderfully coloured robes it hid its miserable body, Stalin was always able to see through to the opportunist reality underneath and fight ruthlessly against it. With these results of his first 'socialist accumula-



tion,' which he later on added to, Stalin took up the task of organizing the Baku proletariat. At this post he made a decisive step forward in his development.

Before him was a great working-class centre, one of those gigantic reservoirs of proletarian strength which was destined subsequently to destroy tsarism and capitalism. But the Baku proletariat was split by national differences, and culturally incredibly backward. That did not daunt Stalin. If the workers were divided by petty national differences they could be united by leading them in a common struggle for common interests; and in this struggle Turkoman workers could be taught to fight shoulder to shoulder with Armenian workers and to trust each other as comrades. If the Baku proletariat was culturally backward, then the struggle against tsarism and capitalism would arouse in it tremendous spiritual energy; it would develop in it that essential for victory—a thirst for knowledge. If the Tiflis railwaymen were but a small force and were for Stalin primarily a symbol of the proletariat, his participation in the battles of the Baku proletariat gave Stalin a factual sense of what an ocean of power the modern working class represents.

It was there, in the part called the Black Town, the town of misery, of Asiatic exploitation and national bickering, in that town teeming with tens of thousands of slaves of capitalism, that was forged Stalin's iron faith in the working class which enabled him to undertake the gigantic task of building socialism in a backward country. Stalin's motto in life came to be: 'Out of this iron ore to forge a sword to conquer capital.' There in Baku he learned how to organize workers divided by national rivalries and even hostile one to another, into a united army of the battling proletariat. In Baku quite on his own Stalin came to understand the national question as Lenin understood it. And there also in Baku Stalin learned to become the leader not only of the Russian proletariat, but also the leader of the Russian Turkoman, Armenian and

Persian workers, the future leader of the united proletariat of the U.S.S.R.

In Baku, Stalin the leader of the *international* proletariat was born. Baku is on the border between Europe and Asia. Baku was a centre of the international import of capital, a centre of operations for the Nobels, the Rothschilds, the Deterdings and Urquharts, for the octopus of international finance capital stretching its tentacles across the Caucasus into Turkey and Persia. It was there that the Persian and Turkish peasants met in one horde, there that the Armenian poor fled from Asia Minor, and there that they all, being cruelly exploited, learned the ABC of the revolutionary struggle from the Russian workers. In organizing these masses Stalin could see the international role of the Russian proletariat, that of adopting the revolutionary doctrines of Marx and passing them on from West to East.

Hardened in the battles of this great turbulent centre of revolution—with numerous opportunities of confirming the accuracy of his conclusions in the quiet of prison cells, testing his revolutionary stamina under the blows of soldiers' rifle-butts in the period of Stolypin reaction, Stalin came out onto the all-Russian and the international battleground. He was in the first ranks of Lenin's disciples in the struggle to maintain the revolutionary aims of the proletariat, when menshevism doffed its revolutionary mask and from propaganda for alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie passed to propaganda in favour of a labour aristocracy that was adapting itself to tsarism. A split with opportunism—complete organizational separation from it as a fundamental condition for preservation of the revolutionary core of the proletariat and for its future victory—this is what Stalin fought for unswervingly through all those black years of reaction. Working out all ramifications of the national question, he went far beyond the boundaries of the experience he had directly accumulated in Russia and so gave battle not only to Georgian federalists,

mensheviks and Bundists. He also exposed those stars of the Second International then in the ascendant—Otto Bauer and Renner—and, revealed by his crystal-clear analysis, showed the opportunists hiding behind the mask of Marxism. It was then that Stalin was discovered by Lenin and from that moment became his closest comrade-in-arms.

Time after time he was taken from his leading positions in the growing Bolshevik movement by the tsarist police. He was repeatedly sent to prison or to terms of exile, and thus more than any other disciple of Lenin he became one with the main party cadres who both 'underground' and in open legal organizations, built up the Leninist Party. At illegal gatherings, meetings of active *Pravda* workers, conferences with workers' representatives who had been elected to the tsarist Duma, on plank-beds in exiles' prisons, and in quiet nightly conversations while under convoy, he tested all the Party links, sensed where strength remained or where it had rusted away, and studied the quality of each brick destined later to the edifice of the Soviet State. When, in lonely exile in remote Turukhansk, amid the booming of the guns of the imperialist war thousands of miles away, he heard the crash of the Second International, Stalin felt neither alarm nor doubt. That which had to be done was being done. The tottering edifice of the Second International, corroded by opportunism, was falling. But a revolutionary proletariat existed, and a Party able to organize it; it would create a new, revolutionary, International.

Stalin was liberated by the February revolution, and after having acquainted himself with the situation, and familiarized himself with the great work carried on in the Leninist laboratory while he had been separated from it for so many years, hand in hand with his great teacher, with imperturbable coolness he began to take up the task of organizing the Party of the working class for its victorious fight. This imperturbable coolness did not leave him for a single moment. When,

after the July days, the question arose as to whether Lenin should surrender to the 'justice' of petty-bourgeois democracy, Stalin, after a conversation with Chkhheidze, said: 'They are butchers: we are not going to hand the old man over to them.' Through the mask of democratic phrases of Chkhheidze, the proletarian leader could see the heart of an executioner, but that executioner to the senile Russian bourgeoisie did not dismay him. And at the secret sixth Congress of the Party, at the moment of victory of the Caliphs-for-an-hour, he openly proclaimed the building of socialist society as the goal of the coming revolution. This was not a mere phrase to serve as analgesic plaster on the wounds of a persecuted Party. In his polemic with Preobrazhensky, Stalin developed the very system of ideas that lay at the basis of his practical working out of Lenin's theory of the building of socialism in a single country.

In the days prior to October and during October, when even those who in exile abroad had been closer to the teacher and had had greater opportunities than had Stalin to dip into the treasury of Lenin's mind, wavered, Stalin stood immovably by the side of his teacher. That was due to the fact that he had studied Leninism *not only from Lenin's books but from the sources of Lenin's teaching*, while building the Leninist Party and leading the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat.

The years of the proletarian revolution saw Stalin not merely at the head quarters of the revolution, but more often in the front fighting-lines. When Moscow was threatened with the noose of famine he was busy obtaining supplies of food. When the ring of hostile forces threatened to close around Tsaritsyn, he organized resistance there. When Petrograd was threatened with danger he was there inspecting the fortifications. He did not see the revolution through communiqués; he looked it straight in the face. He saw its great fights and its very depths. And in this, side by side with revolution, Stalin's final development as a leader of the revolution was completed.

He travelled the country from Baku to Petrograd and from Smolensk to Turukhansk. He led the movement of millions of workers and peasants; he organized the Party from below; he organized the Red Army from below. He had been one of the founders of the Party, and under his supervision and under his leadership hundreds of thousands of new Party members obtained their first experience of revolution. He led its battles at the time when victory fluttered the heart and a wind of hope was blowing. Success did not turn his head. He guided the revolution in moments of defeat and retreat, those moments when fear grips even the bravest hearts. He was immovably calm; even then he knew that days of triumph were to come, knew whence they would come, and even in days of retreat he was busy preparing the ground for the coming victory.

If we consider the road that Stalin travelled up to the moment after Lenin's death when the Party placed him at the helm, we can get an answer to the question as to why it was just he who came to be the head of the Party called upon by history to build socialist society in the U.S.S.R., and assist the international proletariat in its final struggle for victory.

Stalin grew up in the battles in which the Party took shape and conquered, himself independently leading responsible sectors of its front. He is an embodiment of the whole historical experience of the Party. Marxian and Leninist theories were not for him merely theories learned from books; all books did for him was generalize his personal experience which was no more than part of the life of the fighting proletariat.

Just for this reason Stalin was able to apply Marxism and Leninism not only to solve the enormous new problems that now confronted the proletariat in the field of economics (industrialization and collectivization), not only to guide complicated diplomatic movements, or to give mature counsel to brother Parties, not only to foresee trends of development

in military affairs, but also to take the initiative in determining the line of development of our philosophy and literature. In his hands Marxism-Leninism proved to be not only a means of analysing the basic phenomena of the epoch of the decay of capitalism and the creation of socialism, of the epoch full of tremendous contradictions that swept off his feet everyone who had not sufficiently mastered the dialectics of Marx; it was also a means of leading mighty revolutionary battles. This fearless leadership, at one and the same time cautious and audacious, has proved the highest test of Stalin as the great theoretician and statesman of the proletariat.

These two qualities of Stalin are inseparably linked up with a third quality which determined his role as leader in the period of the construction of socialism. It was precisely because he was the best representative of—to make use of his own phrase uttered at the sixth Congress of the Party—‘creative Marxism,’ precisely because his Marxism was the result, not only of profound study of Marx and Lenin, but also of the tests of Marxist doctrine by the tremendous experience of direct leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, that Stalin became more directly welded than any of the other disciples of Lenin, with the Party, and its main forces. In order to lead the struggle of the proletariat in general, and of the proletariat which had captured power in particular, it is not sufficient to be able to see the trend of historical development, to understand the motive forces of the moment, and to be able to recognize decisive stages of the struggle. Indeed, it is not enough to recognize the position; it is essential to be able to organize the struggle for historically necessary aims; that is, to create an organization for the struggle, to concentrate the fighting masses at the decisive sectors of the front, and to provide them with the most suitable leaders. Only such a combination of distinctive, far-sighted, Marxian-Leninist thought with the closest possible knowledge of the main forces of the Party which led the revolution, could

create a leader of the revolution who could take Lenin's place.

Political leaders occupy their place in a party and in history, not because they are elected, not because they are appointed; although in a democratic party like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, election was necessary in order to occupy the place of leader. A leader of the proletariat is decided on in the struggle for the fighting line of the Party, the struggle to organize its impending battles. And Stalin, who even while Lenin was alive was one of the front-rank leaders of the Party, became its recognized and beloved leader as a result of many years of internal Party struggle which were of enormous significance as regards principles. This struggle raged round two questions: whether Marxism-Leninism was the only strategy which could guarantee the triumph of the proletariat and whether the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. was possible at all. The struggle round these questions, which filled four years of the history of the Party, was waged by Stalin from the purest standpoint of principle. It was in this struggle that he developed Lenin's teachings further and defended them with indomitable energy. In this struggle, which in the opinion of the world bourgeoisie was to split the Party, Stalin rallied around himself, not merely the foundation forces of the Party, those who had travelled the whole historical road of Bolshevism, but also the million odd new members of the Party. This struggle did more to spread the teachings of Lenin than scores of years of propaganda. The Party and the whole country saw a clearly marked road, and they saw a leader able to lead them along this road to victory.

This was the content of the four years of internal Party struggle which hurled from the leadership, not only Trotsky, alien to the very nature of the Bolshevik Party, but also those members of the old leadership of Lenin's days who nevertheless had neither proper understanding of Leninism, nor the will and audacity to lead vast masses of the workers and

peasants into the battle for a newer and higher stage of development of the revolution under Stalin's leadership. In the light of historical development the meaning of this dramatic internal Party struggle is so clear that it is not worth while dealing with it in detail here; but while it was going on it was watched with the closest attention by both the international bourgeoisie and the international proletariat who realized that the fate of the first socialist revolution was at stake.

Stalin was victorious because he correctly foresaw the further progress of world history, the further decay of imperialism, and because he also foresaw the great development of the forces of the proletariat and correctly appraised the enormous power of the Leninist Party.

The victory of the Leninist Central Committee with Stalin at its head proved to be the basis on which to build the foundations of socialism.

#### BUILDING SOCIALISM

In a backward capitalist country the working class can seize power if the bourgeoisie in that country is weak and unorganized and if the working class is sufficiently strong and steeled in battle to lead the masses of the peasantry against the bourgeoisie. But it can only proceed to build socialism by creating modern large-scale industry, as this alone can enable it to overcome the results of the peasantry being widely scattered, overcome the petty capitalist character of peasant production, and organize the whole economy of the country on the basis of social ownership of the means of production. This is what Lenin taught, and to this Stalin gave wholehearted support by the remarkable letter he wrote in 1921 to welcome the programme for the electrification of the country as the only real basis for socialism. All the first period of the Nep. (New Economy Policy), with its strengthening of the peasant system of agriculture, was for him



but a means of gathering the strength required to make the change-over from the poor peasant hack to the great industrial motor. But here too the translation of thought into deed demanded tremendous will, determination and power of imagination.

While the Five-Year Plan was still being prepared, all the difficulties in the way of industrialization showed themselves. The industrialization of a poor peasant country without foreign loans called for tremendous self-sacrifice on the part of the masses of workers and peasants. It was necessary to rouse a tremendous wave of enthusiasm throughout the country; it was necessary to fill the masses with an assurance that the struggle would not be in vain, that it was going to open the road to new life. To rally the proletariat, to mobilize its best instincts, to widen and deepen its knowledge of the paths of socialist construction, was not difficult for the Leninist Party. As a child of the revolutionary proletariat, its enthusiastic acceptance of Stalin's great programme of construction was a direct reflection of those enormous potential forces which lay dormant in the masses of the industrial proletariat. The faith of Lenin and Stalin in those forces was abundantly justified.

The call for *self-criticism* sounded by Stalin evoked tremendous response from the proletariat. The masses of the workers threw themselves wholeheartedly into the task of the smallest screw and wheel in the machine of the proletarian country. The appeal for socialist competition and shock-brigade work released powerful streams of working-class energy, brought powerful springs of proletarian initiative welling up, and showed the whole world what tremendous deeds can be accomplished by an appeal to the social interests of our young and powerful class. As if on the wave of a magician's wand, there was a true revival throughout our working class of those great emotions which stirred it to the victorious struggles of October days.

The task in the village was difficult, understandably so. It goes without saying that the more intelligent elements of the peasantry, those who were most closely connected with the proletariat, took up the industrialization programme with enthusiasm. The broad masses of the poor and middle peasants welcomed the work of construction. Their sons were drawn towards it not merely in search of employment, but also because it opened a way out from dreary village life. But the kulak class could not but understand that this industrialization was going to strengthen the forces of the proletariat, and make possible the complete elimination of the capitalist layer of the rural population. The kulaks not only resisted socialist industrialization. They began to organize the part of the rural population that was dependent upon them materially and spiritually, mobilizing them for a struggle against that Soviet Government which was preparing for the battle that was to carry the country to a new historical stage. The kulaks were a considerable social force. They not only represented the capitalist past of the country districts, but also the dreams of the future which the broad masses of the peasantry cherished in their dreams of 'getting on in the world.' After the abolition of the big landlord, the capitalist and the merchant classes, the kulaks were the last hope of the remnants of the bourgeois elements in the country, and abroad the last bulwark of the would-be Cavaignacs who dreamed of revenge for October. The struggle of kulakdom not only roused all the remnants of the bourgeoisie in the U.S.S.R., and would-be organizers of future intervention abroad. It found an echo even in certain groups of the Communist Party.

Classes are not separated from each other by a Chinese Wall. A party with millions of members, which had achieved the October Revolution, and then in the battles against the landlords and the capitalists, had absorbed the most energetic plebeian elements of the country, could not but have at its

tail-end some backward groups which were entangled in kulak ideas. The State apparatus of the proletarian dictatorship could not help absorbing from the old State apparatus certain strata connected with the kulaks and the bourgeoisie, even with the interventionists. The resistance of these elements could not but find an echo among certain sections of the Party which were scared by the kulak danger. The kulak class must not be thought of as a ramshackle Russian bourgeoisie in landlord get-up; it was a class of millions, a class which knew how to manœuvre and how to strike out straight; it was a class army with, as following, a considerable section of the rural population.

The Rights croaked that the fight against the kulaks would inevitably lead to a break with the rural population. They held that it was necessary to slow down the pace of industrialization, and give freedom of development to kulak farming and trust that it would 'grow into socialism.' The danger of Trotskyism lay in its notion of breaking off the alliance with the middle peasants, and thus playing into the hands of the kulaks. By shaking the iron Leninist discipline of the Party it would have opened wide the gates for kulak counter-revolution. The Right opportunists, on the other hand, furnished the kulaks with their fighting slogans, and became their direct agents in the Party. All while claiming to have no differences of principle with the Party, to disagree only (!) with the pace of industrialization and collectivization, the Rights proposed a policy which in fact would have led to the restoration of capitalism. A concession to the pressure of the Rights on this question would have had the same effect as if Lenin in the October days had permitted vacillation on the question of the uprising. And just as Lenin needed to be firmly convinced of the correctness of Marxism in order to have no wavering in adopting the decision for the uprising, Stalin's determination to carry through the Five-Year Plan and to liquidate the kulaks as a class was an expression of his

firm conviction that Lenin's theory of the possibility of building socialism in the U.S.S.R. was correct. Only one who had not adopted these theories mechanically, but had spent years pondering over the destinies of the Soviet and world revolution, could decide to take up the struggle with millions of kulaks, notwithstanding the tremendous difficulties that he knew stood in the way.

First of all it was necessary to mobilize tens of billions of roubles, in other words an immense store of provisions, raw materials and labour. In no other period in the history of humanity, except in war time, has a state collected such a huge quantity of values in such a short time. When the capitalist world saw the figures of the Five-Year Plan they thought they were faked. The capitalists could conceive of the possibility of organizing such a transfer of resources from individuals to the country as a whole only if for another war. They could not conceive of this being done voluntarily, without the menace of guns. Stalin, the disciple of Marx—who, with his great creative imagination, already in 1847 could see the marching army of labour—Stalin, the disciple of Lenin, who in the first small volunteer overtime gang on the Kazan railway was able to discern the great initiative of the whole proletariat—knew that a great human ant-hill would arise, and that its labours would change the face of the mountains and the valleys, of the rivers and the seas, of the Soviet Union. The works of the writers of that period vividly depict the endless trains bearing cement, iron, coal and tarpaulin-covered machines, the huge conglomeration of humanity at railway stations, folk streaming from the countryside to the centres of construction. These books give us a picture of the great march forward of the peoples to socialism.

When the capitalist world learned that the Leninist Party—that Stalin—were not content with a proclamation about building socialism, but had actually begun the job, the capitalist classes prophesied that it would end in building a Tower of

Babel. Where will the Bolsheviks find the necessary numbers of skilled workers, of foremen, of engineers to carry out these gigantic plans? Under capitalism knowledge was the prerogative of 'blue blood'; it was distributed by capitalism only at great expense in order to serve their golden Moloch. But even while busy announcing that the proletariat could not possibly master science, the capitalist world was not so very sure about its own forecasts, and so it decided to lend a helping hand to make the great building turn into a Tower of Babel. At the command of the General Staffs of the world bourgeoisie, the former servants of the Russian bourgeoisie, venerable scientists and engineers whom the proletariat had allowed to work for them, began to create confusion, by drawing up false plans in order to create bottle-necks and blind-alleys to prevent future development, and at the same time they made their plans for smashing the whole building if intervention came off.

'The mob has defeated us in the open field by their numbers; we shall smash them with science,' was the prophecy of Palchinsky, Chief of General Staff of the wreckers. But soaring on the wings of faith in its own strength the proletariat with the eagle eye of class vigilance espied the machinations of the enemy and thwarted them. The place of the wreckers was taken by young proletarian engineers who, though as yet without sufficient knowledge, nevertheless burned with the desire to fulfil the will of their class. The disintegration of world capitalism and the very acute crisis which prevailed in those days made it possible to make use of the services of thousands of foreign engineers who had been trained at the expense of the bourgeoisie and were compelled by the decay of capitalism to sell their knowledge to the victorious proletariat. But the problem was not going to be liquidated by hiring others' brains and Stalin gave the proletariat a new slogan: 'We must overtake and surpass the capitalist world in applied science.' This call expressed that

confidence in the creative powers of the proletariat which had inspired Marx and Lenin when they put forward the ideal of polytechnical schools. The great pupil of great teachers, who had now himself become the teacher, not only of the Party but of all the toilers of one of the greatest countries in the world, caused not only millions of proletarian children to go to school, but also adult proletarians who had passed through the school of class battles. In the name of the future of their class, in the name of socialism, in open battle, they now mastered mathematics, and pure and applied science, and put these at the service of the cause of the emancipation of mankind from capitalism. The country passed through a great stirring of its peoples, and also a great cultural revolution.

It was, however, on the boundless fields of the Soviet countryside, that the gyrotillers of socialism ploughed deepest. It was not in the hard rock of the mountains, nor in the walls of mine-shafts, but in the soft soil of the quiet countryside that the socialist builders met with the greatest difficulties. Industrialization in the U.S.S.R. was different from industrialization in capitalist countries in the furious pace at which it was carried on. It was different too in its social nature, that is, who erected these giants of industry, and for whom. But in unfurling the banner of socialist industrialization and making tremendous demands upon the vast masses of the builders, the Party really demanded only one thing of them, and that was, to fulfil the dreams of their class. The industrial worker, who represented the core of these masses, had always dreamed of replacing the prisons of capitalist factories by vast, well-lighted socialist factories. In a few short years the enthusiasm of the industrial workers had transformed the peasants who had been drawn into the work of construction.

The collectivization of agriculture meant not merely a tremendous break in the economic structure of the countryside, but also a tremendous break in century-old habits, in the views and morals of the masses of the peasantry. Before

the collectivization of agriculture was introduced, the peasants ran their farms exactly as their fathers and grandfathers had done before them, and did not believe that townsmen who did not know the difference between wheat and rye could help them in farming. They were brought up to believe that man was naturally hostile, that everyone strove for himself, and if you did not keep an eye on your neighbour he stole your goods. When a peasant dreamed of a better life it was of chests packed with all manner of junk, of the neighing of horses of his own in the stable, the lowing of his own fat cows in the meadow. The peasant's whole ideal can be given in two words: 'My own.' These habits and these ideals had already been deeply undermined by history. As a result of tsarist exploitation and the imperialist and civil wars, millions of peasants lived on a plot of land without any stock of their own; during the civil war they had learned to act collectively under the leadership of the proletariat; they perceived the strength of this class which earlier had come from their own peasant ranks, the class that had smashed the power of the tsars and of the rich, and smashed the intervention of fourteen capitalist states. They saw that this class was building up its own country in alliance with them, and that it was this class that called upon them to take a great leap forward. It wanted to help them organize their life both according to the most up-to-date scientific knowledge and so as to serve not the interests of private owners, but the interests of the whole of society.

The whole capitalist world was convinced that the fight for the collectivization of peasant farming would end in defeat for the Bolsheviks. The kulaks were also convinced of this, and so too were the remnants of the town petty middle class. It was on this conviction that the interventionists built their plans. But Stalin's calculations on the victory of the collective farms were as exact as a geometrical figure. His calculations were based on the increased strength of the

victorious proletariat which was the driving-force in the development of the country. Relying on the strength of the proletariat and on the support of the peasant masses, the Soviet Government hurled itself upon the kulaks and showed this powerful and cocksure class that the proletariat had no fears about liquidating it. Stalin's calculations were based on the appeal to the working-class sense of the peasants in opposition to their kulak prejudices. The peasantry could not but understand that tractors and combines were stronger than their scraggy old hacks; the peasantry could not help being convinced that agricultural science was useful to them. Stalin's calculations were based on the power of an organization which was not directed against the interests of millions of poor and middle farmers as in capitalist countries, but which defended the interests of those tens of millions of toilers, and was to bring them a prosperous cultural life. Finally, Stalin's calculations were based on the ability of the Bolshevik Party to manage the vast area of the Soviet Union.

And Stalin's estimate turned out to be right in every particular. The Party relied on the great growth of industry, on the growing activity of the masses of the rural poor, and after smashing the Right wing defeatists led by Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, under the leadership of Stalin began its attack on the capitalist elements throughout the countryside. The countryside was roused by a wave of agitation unprecedented in history. With the combined tactics of appealing to the common sense of the poor and middle peasants and of striking hard at the kulak, socialism achieved its first world victory in the rural districts. The majority of peasant farms were organized into collective farms. But yet the novelty of the work led to mistakes in carrying out the strategic plan. Forgetting what Lenin and Stalin had taught—that although the collective farm is a socialist form of organization of labour, it is nevertheless a transitional form, that it does not mean the socialization of all means of production, but only



of the principal ones, a large number of organizers of collective farms exceeded the limits of what was possible and useful at that stage, and by so doing caused considerable discontent among the masses of the peasantry. The leader of the proletariat, who had gone deeply, not only into study of the nature of the petty middle class, but also into the question of class strategy, restrained the disorderly forward rush, insisted on the abolition of those errors which had resulted from being 'dizzy with success,' and called for a new advance to be based on convincing the peasant masses of the usefulness of collective farms and on an understanding of the nature of collective farming.

The victory of the idea of collectivization was so immense that in spite of the rebuff of the wave of collectivization which resulted from the mistakes which had been committed, the achievements of socialism in agriculture far exceeded the anticipations of the first Five-Year Plan. Then a second socialist offensive against the capitalist elements in the rural districts began. The newly built Soviet factories turned out an increasing quantity of agricultural machines, and year after year machinery—the product of the socialist factories—moved forward to first place among the productive forces of the countryside. The country was covered with a network of machine tractor stations which became centres for passing on all necessary modern knowledge to the countryside—technical schools for the villages. Yet the capitalist elements in the rural districts, although defeated, were not entirely routed, and did not give up the struggle. They appealed to the greedy bourgeois impulses of the small property owner type and took advantage of every difficulty connected with the mastery of new methods in order to sow disbelief in their usefulness; they tried to undermine the collective farms, to plunder the product of their labour, to cause a breakdown of the supply of household needs. They tried to convince wavering, weak members of the collective farms that by quiet worming away,

by red tape, by passive resistance, by sly sabotage, they would succeed in compelling the Bolsheviks to give up trying to collectivize agriculture.

When these difficulties arose the Right Wing faction in the Party again raised their heads and began to whisper: 'Is it not time to retreat?' But the kulaks and their Right Wing tools were mistaken. Under Stalin's guidance the Leninist leadership displayed the same main features of Marxist-Leninist strategy that we have seen in the first political steps taken by Stalin: having made sure of the correct road, they forged ahead along that road in spite of all difficulties. In 1930 Stalin succeeded in getting the Party to rectify the mistakes committed by those who had become 'dizzy with success,' and keep within the proper limits of the plan of the offensive. In 1932 he was adamant against the proposal to surrender the positions already occupied by correct policy. And in order to fortify those positions the Party took another step forward—it established political departments at machine tractor stations and on Soviet State farms, and to these it appointed tens of thousands of steadfast and tried Communists to guide the political struggle for the collective farms and to help in organizing labour on them.

The sowing and harvest seasons of 1933 provided the world with the second victory of socialism in the rural districts. They showed that the bulk of collective farmers had become convinced that the collective farms had come to stay, that they were to the advantage of the peasants and that they had opened the way to sound prosperity. This does not mean that from that moment all difficulties in the countryside disappeared. It was only after several years of improvement in the organization of labour on the collective farms, after the masses of the collective farmers had mastered the use of the new machine methods, and after several years of growth of socialist culture in the rural districts and the growth of prosperity of the peasant masses, that socialism achieved its final

victory in the minds of the whole of the peasantry. But the crossing of the Rubicon was accomplished in 1933.

#### THE DEFENCE OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY

The tension of these years in which victory over the last broad stratum of the bourgeoisie in the U.S.S.R. was won, in which a gigantic socialist industry was created, in which, with the aid of tractors and combines, the proletariat succeeded through collective farms in putting the peasantry onto the road of socialism, in which, in a word, the foundations of classless socialist society were laid down, was immense. To do in five years what might well have demanded fifty required a heroic effort on the part of the masses of the people such as had never been seen before. But the pace, the intensity of the Five-Year Plan were not arbitrarily selected by Stalin. The stern commands from the bridge, the orders to keep a constant full head of steam, the strict orders that no one was to leave his post, the sleepless nights at General Headquarters—all this was the result of the far-sightedness of the leader of the revolution and of his immediate comrades-in-arms.

By laying the foundations of socialism the U.S.S.R. struck a fatal blow at the capitalist world, which was experiencing a profound crisis. The oppressed masses of other countries saw a world of increasing decay. Capitalism was unable to provide scope for the growth of productive forces resulting from the amazing progress of applied science; it doomed tens of millions of industrial workers and hundreds of millions of ruined peasants to unemployment and starvation. That world continued to exist simply because the backward masses, browbeaten by terror and corrupted by Social-Democracy Labourism, reformism of one brand or another, had neither unity, nor confidence in their own strength.

But every brick that was laid to the foundations of socialism, every new foot of wall of that building now rising helped to shake the disbelief in the creative powers of the proletariat

that was at the bottom of the impotence of our comrades of the West. And Stalin and the Central Committee of the Party knew that the world bourgeoisie would not let them complete the edifice of socialism in peace, simply because it was accelerating the inevitable socialist revolution in the capitalist countries and giving wings to the struggle of the colonial masses for liberation.

The Republic of Labour was in the position of a detachment of troops which comes to the edge of a wood and sees the machine-guns of the enemy waiting in the clearing. There were two solutions—either to retreat or to rush across the danger zone and capture the machine-guns by storm. Every new metallurgical and chemical works, every sturdy new collective farm, made the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. stronger for any struggle which the enemy might force upon it. The enemy was actively preparing for battle. The years after the death of Lenin were years of furious capitalist arming. Not satisfied with tanks, bombing-planes and poison gas, the bourgeoisie donned the armour of fascism for the struggle against the revolutionary proletariat, the fortress of which was the U.S.S.R. The guides of the revolution, and its leader Stalin, were confronted with the task of equipping the builders of socialism for defence.

This task was fulfilled in the years of the first Five-Year Plan. Socialism acquired wings. In the course of a few years the proletariat out of nothing built huge metallurgical works and one of the best air fleets in the world. When, on May Day, of 1932, hundreds of aeroplanes soared over the Red Square and blotted out the sun, the roar of their engines seemed to be singing the chorus of Lenin's favourite song: 'Never, no never, shall Communists be slaves.'

When, on May day, 1933, the Red Square echoed and re-echoed with the roar of hundreds of heavy tanks and heavy artillery, the world understood Stalin's words: 'There are no fortresses that Bolsheviks cannot take.'

And when at the very same time the Soviet Union expressed its readiness for complete disarmament and called upon the capitalist world to disarm, this world understood that through the lips of Soviet diplomacy there spoke a power which had no need for war, a power which by its example of great victories of emancipated labour intended to emancipate all humanity—but which would win any war that might be thrust upon it.

On Lenin's Mausoleum, surrounded by his immediate comrades-in-arms—Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Kalinin and Orjonikidze—stood Stalin in his grey soldier's great-coat. His calm eyes gazed thoughtfully on the hundreds of thousands of proletarians marching past Lenin's tomb with the firm step of shock troops, future conquerors of the capitalist world. He knew that he had fulfilled the vow he had uttered ten years before at Lenin's grave. And all the toilers of the U.S.S.R. and—what is more—the world revolutionary proletariat knew this too.

And towards that compact, calm, rocky figure of our leader Stalin, rolled the vast waves of love and confidence of the masses marching by, firm in knowledge that there, on Lenin's tomb, stood the General Staff of the coming victorious world revolution.

January, 1934.

## II

# WOODROW WILSON

### *NOTE*

[The essays in this selection of Radek's writings have of course not been selected at random, or merely because of their 'news' appeal. A book is not a newspaper. And although a selection of writings made up of diplomatic notes, pamphlets and essays cannot be expected to form a perfectly logical sequence, still the order chosen is not without purpose.

Nothing could better illustrate the contrast between the two kinds of prominent men—the leader of the leading Marxist Party, and a 'great' leader of capitalist 'democracy'—than following the essay on Stalin by Radek's delightful portrait of a petty middle-class democrat, Wilson, 'inventor' of the League of Nations. A. B.]

# WOODROW WILSON

February 5th, 1924

THE news of Woodrow Wilson's death moves nobody. Politically Wilson died the very day the Versailles Treaty was signed. Now it only remains for America to bury with great pomp that little which remained of him after his spiritual demise in Paris.

With Wilson's name, however, is bound up the last Utopia of the bourgeoisie, a Utopia which inspired millions of people during the years of the World War, a Utopia which is the last great idea of the capitalist world. After the crash of this Utopia the capitalist world will live only so long as the working class permits it, and even that life will be only something senile, sucking the blood of the living.

Wilson's career is an example of those essentially American phenomena which we Europeans are unable to understand. In America men distinguished neither by intellect nor character commonly obtain the leading posts in the government, and one really cannot understand why they become president instead of senior clerk to a petty under-secretary in one of the countless government offices. Since Lincoln, America has not had one outstanding statesman for president.

It would seem too as if Wilson's own past should have preserved him from any possibility of being made president. The man graduated from a university law school with the intention of becoming a lawyer, but he correctly estimated his real abilities, and took up lecturing at a women's college. Then he decided to consecrate himself to scholarship and began writing books such as any professor of the calibre of Kotliarevski could have turned out without overstraining any other part of his body than that which is indispensable for sitting. Wilson's book on the history of the State

might have been used in American prisons as an instrument of torture. His main work, *A History of the American People*,\* is nothing more than the most tedious pragmatic school rehash of history by an eminently mediocre bourgeois historian. The only place in which Wilson showed anything in the way of feeling or thought was in a newspaper article on Edmund Burke, the great conservative English writer of the end of the eighteenth century, and denouncer of the French revolution. In this Wilson glorifies Burke as a talented though weak-charactered writer who fought against any penetration of the ideas of the French revolution into England, and Wilson asks with horror what would have happened had the ideas of the French revolution but prevailed in England.

In 1910 he relinquished his post of Rector of Princeton University, because his notions of reforming the university failed completely. He then stood as candidate for the governorship of the State of New Jersey. This State, bordering on New York, applied the anti-trust laws even more delicately than New York State. The Democratic Party caucus which was running New Jersey at that time was badly compromised, and needed a candidate 'with a clean slate,' A learned professor who did not take bribes, and who moreover as Rector of Princeton had even become notorious by reason of his struggle against financiers interfering in university affairs, was the very man for this job of whitening over the deep-seated graft.

In a book dedicated to a glorification of Wilson, Wilson's biographer, Daniel Halévy explains quite unequivocally why the crooked Democratic ring wanted to avail themselves of Wilson's assistance. He writes of the manœuvres they use

'One consists of hiding themselves behind a candidate who is not a professional politician. They choose a man capable of pleasing and likely to succeed by the novelty of his name, by a prestige acquired elsewhere amidst surroundings not

\* *A History of the American People*, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 1902.



discredited, a university chair or a court of justice, a man in fact of the type of Mr. Wilson, who can be tempted by the brilliancy of high office. The politicians who adopt him and push his candidature, count upon the inexperience of this newcomer, and on their knowledge of the world, to reduce him to impotency on the morrow of his election. They then are able to govern as they governed before.' (*President Wilson*, Daniel Halévy, translated by Hugh Stokes: London, 1919, p. 92).

Thanks to these methods of far-famed American 'democracy' our professor became a governor.

In this position Wilson was able to make speeches against the domination of the trusts without making the least change in the government of the country. Anybody who reads those speeches, collected into a book called *The New Freedom*,\* must feel that at last a just man had appeared to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Wilson demanded public conduct of the affairs of the trusts, put forward a truly bolshevik slogan of 1917 against trade secrets, and demanded subordination of the big trusts to the control of society. That gave him a reputation as a real democrat, and prepared the ground for his election as President of the United States of America in 1912.

The outbreak of the world war found Wilson at this eminent post. Expressing the anti-war spirit of the majority of the population of the United States, Wilson delivered himself of one anti-war speech after another, as if the spirit of the pacifist prophets of old had entered into him. He thundered against secret diplomacy, against secret treaties; he spoke about the common interests of all nations, of how indispensable was their union. He spoke so well that not only were all the bourgeois pacifists enraptured, but as war-weariness developed, a veritable Wilson cult began in the ranks of the Social-Democrats. Old man Kautsky even wrote a treatise on the historical roots of Wilson's pacifism.

\* *The New Freedom*, by Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 1913.

All this time American finance capital under the control of J. P. Morgan, was feverishly selling supplies to the Entente armies. Some explain that by the ties of blood and race uniting English and American financial circles. That is rubbish. Bankers of purely German or of German-Jewish origin, such as Baruch, Schwab and Kahn, were working for the Entente not less zealously than Morgan. There was a simple reason for this. Great Britain then dominated the seas. Supplying Germany might have led to a conflict with British imperialism, whereas Germany was unable to prevent them supplying the Allies, because her fleet was locked up in the North Sea.

From August, 1914, up to February, 1917, the American trusts supplied the Entente with armaments and foodstuffs to the value of ten and a half milliard dollars (\$10,500,000,000); American exports exceeded imports by five and a half milliard dollars (\$5,500,000,000). The Entente paid in gold, and with American securities hitherto held by Entente capitalists.

‘In two years of war Morgan the younger earned more than the elder Morgan did in the whole of his life,’

wrote John Kenneth Turner in his excellent book on America’s participation in the war. This book gives the most illuminating factual picture of the dictatorship of finance capital in the democratic United States during the war. Any rumours of the possibility of peace led to a fall in the value of American trust stocks and the bankers were afraid of nothing so much as of peace.

Three-quarters of the American Press was working for Morgan and his associates in this monster and prolonged plunder. The American governmental apparatus also collaborated. While Wilson in his speeches called for the defence of freedom and democracy, the State apparatus jailed thousands of men and women who were struggling against the danger of war. During the 1916 presidential election Wilson cam-

paigned for re-election as 'the man who has kept us out of war'—as a president who would maintain American neutrality and work for peace. The trust magnates and financiers who held the real power lay low behind the scenes. Wilson was elected. Preparations for getting America into the war immediately went full steam ahead.

The Entente countries were finding it more and more difficult to pay for their purchases in America. They intimated that they might be obliged to limit themselves to home production of munitions if America did not come into the war. In the spring of 1917 Wilson made all preparations to break with Germany, and then engineered the break.

America's entry into the war was against the desire of the vast majority of the American people. This showed in the small number of volunteers declaring their readiness to join the army. Governmental repression of socialists and of all opponents of war, which in America took on a greater ferocity than tsarist Russia ever knew, confirmed the antagonism of the nation to war. But finance capital won. There was an opportunity to make profits as never before in the history of mankind. Wilson handed over the whole management of the war manufactures—the distribution of orders—the fixing of prices, to the capitalist organizations concerned. His role was to begin preaching the terms of the eternal peace which would be attained once the Hohenzollern tyranny was crushed.

These sermons gave new strength to the fatigued armies of the Entente. Wilson's speeches filled the French, Belgian and British soldiers with a faith that though they individually might perish, the war which killed them would be the last war. Wilsonism became the faith of mankind suffering on the battlefields—and of the lesser middle class of the world. An end to military alliances, an end to secret treaties, self-determination of all nations, the abolition of militarism—day after day thousands of newspapers conveyed these slogans

flung out by the President of the United States—by the head of the most powerful country in the world.

Then came the day when the German front wavered. Finding itself on the verge of disaster the German government snatched as at a straw at Wilson's fourteen points, as something that might save German imperialism from complete annihilation by the victorious Entente. Germany appealed to the American president as to a world judge for the terms of truce. It took Wilson a whole month to grind out his terms, through his tightly clenched lips, and all the time he assured Germany she could not have peace unless she sacrificed the Kaiser. In this way he literally organized a revolt in Germany. An uprising had in fact begun, when the German ruling classes capitulated in the Compiègne woods.

The terms of the armistice were ruthlessly severe. Their acceptance brought Germany utterly helpless to the Peace Conference. But had anybody taken it into his head to resist, he would have been torn to pieces by the popular masses of Germany who then really did believe that Wilson would defend their country while peace was negotiated. The Social-Democratic government, being very afraid of revolution, did its best to keep up that belief in Wilson. Alone Soviet Russia, from the tribune of the Congress of Soviets, in a note to Wilson publicly proclaimed to the international proletariat that his promises were bluff. Shortly afterwards began the tragi-comedy of Versailles.

We now have a quite clear picture of what took place behind the walls of the study in which four men—Clemenceau, David Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson and Orlando—tried to settle the destiny of mankind. The books of Wilson's Secretary of War, Newton Baker, and of Tardieu, one of the chiefs of the French delegation and the book of Keynes, British financial expert, have preserved a fine picture for humanity. On the one hand was old Clemenceau, a man of iron will, who knew the hour of revenge for the crushing defeat of 1871 had

come—a man who for fifty years had awaited this moment—a very embodiment of national hatred. On the other was Lloyd George, representative of the powerful British bourgeoisie, and he was resolved to allow Germany no opportunity of re-establishing her mighty fleet, and also bent on keeping France from becoming too powerful, and America from achieving world leadership. Between them sat a quondam professor with no concrete knowledge of European affairs, and this American puritan came to the sittings weak and muzzy from sittings of a different nature with the elegant French ladies with whom French diplomacy surrounded him. But even had Wilson not shown himself a fool, weak among tough wolves, had he really been a man of iron, even so, none of his promises could have been fulfilled.

American finance capital came out of the war strongest. But had a real league of nations been created, and America had been obliged to subordinate herself to its decisions, there would have been a combination of other powers within that league which would have been more powerful than America. It was more advantageous to American capital to remain aloof from divided, balkanized Europe and one by one to win leadership over a score of countries which were isolated, weak and in need of America. Wilson's plan for a real league of nations, opening the way for a union of the whole capitalist world for economic reconstruction, was now found unprofitable by American capital. And on the other hand, the League of Nations, in the form in which it appeared after Wilson's capitulation, could find no popular mass support in America.

American finance capital, which had plundered half the world, including its own American population, was obliged to take notice of the stance of its own lesser middle class which was suffering from the terribly high prices, and had become disgusted with the war to the last degree. 'Out of Europe' was their frame of mind.

The disappointed pacifists turned hostile to the Versailles Treaty, because it was in direct contradiction to Wilson's earlier preaching. The population of America was altogether against it because it made it incumbent on America to help enforce the banditry of the Versailles Treaty and would automatically draw them into a further war. Thus Wilson returned to America politically a corpse.

Some would explain Wilson's collapse by his weakness. Others declare that this latest prophet of the international bourgeoisie was a great hypocrite and charlatan. We may quite calmly leave this question to those who love the biographies of great figures of the epoch of perishing capitalism. For even if Wilson were crystal pure, and of great heroic character, his ideas were doomed to fail. The capitalist world is a world based on competition. Against any one organization of bandits which strives to organize the plunder of peoples, others inevitably rise up, and seek new methods of acquiring super-profits. The interests of the propertied classes of the nations are intimately bound up with dynasties and military cliques and they are all directed towards the maintenance of rivalries, of armaments, of wars and discord among the peoples.

The idea of an organized mankind ceases to be an illusion or a Utopia only on the day when the one class really interested in the abolition of all exploitation of one part of the world by another, takes it up; and this class can finally conquer only through its own international militant organization, which, when it finally wins, it will be its task and its duty to replace by an international economic organization. Lenin was the embodiment of this great realistic idea of organized humanity. It may be that tens of years will pass before this is realized, but there is not one iota of Utopia in it. It is a goal towards which the international proletariat will go on marching because it is a goal which stands before the proletariat and lights its way like a guiding star.



### III

## EBERT

### *NOTE*

[This book might be said to be a review of two civilizations—the old civilization of capitalism and capitalist ‘democracy,’ and the more advanced, broader and freer civilization of communism. One of the contrasts is in this: the building of the new civilization in the U.S.S.R. goes on steadily and triumphantly, whereas in the old world of decaying capitalism we have an endless stream of demagogues all pretending to remake the old, all really part of the decay.

The essay on Ebert, first President of the Weimar German Republic which German capitalism in its black and brown get-up has now destroyed, is not a caricature. It is a portrait. And as we in Britain have many potential Eberts, we ought to be able to appreciate the fairness of Radek’s portrait of one of the greatest of these ‘labour’ men who, instead of laying the foundations of socialist construction, lay the foundations for fascist ruin.

This essay was written ten years ago.

Those who in the same breath glibly say the Communist Party of Germany ‘caused’ German fascism, and that Communists did not foresee fascism (this notion that fascism is something different from capitalism) will revise their views when they read this portrait and note the date of it. But this will only be useful if they go a step further, into our present British reality, and ponder on the present role of the bosses of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party.]



## EBERT

February, 1925

THE telegraph has brought the unexpected news of the death of Fritz Ebert, German Social-Democratic leader and President of the German Republic, at the very height of the struggle that was developing around him in connection with the end of his term as President. In Ebert the most typical member of German Social-Democracy has left the stage, a man who can without exaggeration be said to have been the helmsman of that onetime great workers' party when it set its course for bourgeois waters. The policy of German Social-Democracy during the war was known as Scheidemann's policy, yet Scheidemann was but the pennant at the masthead. If any single individual determined that policy, it was Fritz Ebert. The political biography of this man is therefore the history of the fall of German Social-Democracy, just as the biography of August Bebel is the history of its creation.

Ebert was born in 1871 in the south of Germany. His father was a tailor. South Germany was economically the most backward part of the country, still largely in a petty-capitalist stage of organization. Tailors were not industrial workers but handicraftsmen. Fritz Ebert's whole surroundings were of the petty-bourgeois democratic type. The class antagonism between the handicraftsmen proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the south was not so pronounced as already in the Ruhr basin in the north or in Saxony. Politically the south was dominated by lower middle-class democracy. Ebert was brought up in the atmosphere of the oppression of Social-Democracy, because he was seven when Bismarck passed through the Reichstag the Emergency Law against the socialists.

But the law was not applied in the south as ferociously as it

was in the north; and when Ebert began to go into politics the law was already repealed. This repeal of the Emergency Law aroused great illusions in a section of the German Social-Democrats, and the marked economic improvement which accompanied the repeal intensified those illusions. Ebert made himself prominent as a trade union worker. He was a saddler by trade, and he gave up working himself, and devoted himself to wholtime organizing work among saddlers. Trade union work was exceedingly congenial to Ebert's temperament. A southerner who did not like abstractions, but facts, hard-headed, practically minded. Inspiring dreams were foreign to his nature; he was born for just the atmosphere that was then to prevail in German Social-Democracy.

Handicraftsman Bebel studied Lassalle's books with their grand prospects of working-class advancement, and imbibed the principal ideas of the Communist Manifesto. While in prison, young Bebel flung himself like a starving man on the history of civilization and read everything available to enlarge his horizon. His book *Women and Socialism*, even in its first edition, showed the vast expanse of his creative imagination, his eagerness to understand both the past and the future of mankind.

But the generation which grew up politically in the nineties, after the overthrow of the Emergency Law against socialism and in the period of economic development, fed neither on economic theory nor on the history of revolutionary or labour movements, but on politics of social reforms, problems of labour legislation, and immediate trade union aims—on concrete issues, figures, facts, dates, and stubborn organizational work.

August Bebel was a many-sided man. He was equally capable of writing a book on the conditions of bakers or the caliphate period of Arab culture. Ebert was able to write only a statistical work on the conditions of the workers of Bremen. As Social-Democracy and the trade unions grew, as

the country developed economically, reformist tendencies developed within German Social-Democracy. Vollmar was its first inspirer, Bernstein a later. A struggle within the ranks of the working class of Germany began over the revisionist question. Ebert, who was at that time elected to the editorial board of the Bremen Party paper, and later to the secretaryship of the Party in Bremen, joined that intermediate section of the Party which defended the principles of communism by word of mouth, but in practice followed a purely opportunist line. Even at that time in Bremen, Ebert was known as a 'sound and practical politician.' Other editors of the Party paper—Diderich, Heinrich Schultz, Henke—attempted to turn the Party paper leftward. But when it came to a choice between revolution and social-patriotism, all these gentlemen lined up under Ebert's command, and proved that their radicalism was hardly any different from that of Ebert.

During the Bremen Party congress of 1904, old Singer, Bebel's friend, the second chairman of the Central Committee of the German Party, 'discovered' Ebert. He liked Ebert's good sense, his organizational ability, his firm will, and he recommended Ebert to Bebel as a suitable candidate for the Central Committee, to deal with organizational problems. At the Jena congress in 1905, Ebert was elected to the Central Committee of the Party. Ebert now became well known in the Party and won great respect for his organizational abilities, his even temper and his firm will. When Bebel fell ill, the practical policy of the Party passed more and more completely into Ebert's hands. In the struggle against the revisionists he took up a very conciliatory position and when after Bebel's death Hugo Haase, a Koenigsberg lawyer, with a reputation as a radical socialist, was elected first chairman of the Party, the revisionists rested their main hopes on broad-shouldered, low-browed Ebert, whose very fat radiated energy and will. Ebert avoided any open conflict with the revisionists, or with the trade union bureaucracy, with which he was closely

connected in outlook and political method. He favoured the revisionists wherever possible.

I met Ebert in very characteristic circumstances in 1911. In Württemberg owing to the development of the metallurgical industry a militant spirit was growing among the working masses. In Stuttgart and Göttingen the leadership was in the hands of radicals, while the District Committee of the Party was in the hands of reformists. The Party paper in Göttingen, edited at that time by Talgheimer, was not only carrying on a relentless war with reformism but was also taking part in that struggle with Kautsky in which German communism was later to be forged. The District Committee discovered that the paper was in financial difficulties. Workers managing the paper did not know the laws, got into debt in circumstances which might have been utilized by the Public Prosecutor to earn them penal servitude. The reformists decided to take advantage of this and subsidize the paper in order to change its line. When Ebert arrived at Göttingen to settle the conflict between the local organization and the District Committee we showed him how the reformist leaders were trying to suppress the revolutionary paper. Ebert said coldly: 'I came to settle this conflict, and here you wish to open a campaign against the reformists. I close the meeting and I tell you that the Party leadership will lance this abscess.' We as well as the local workers felt at once that we had to ally with an absolute class enemy. Without a word the workers spontaneously blocked the doorway with a table and demanded our declaration to be recorded. We already had a feeling that the Left was going to be expelled from German Social-Democracy and warned Rosa Luxemburg about it, but she took our forecast rather sceptically.

In 1912 Ebert urged the Party to form an election bloc with the liberals—German Social-Democracy's first open step towards a reformist policy.

From the very first day of the war Ebert supported German

imperialism. Though quite a number of Social-Democrats did hesitate, Ebert had no doubts. That man was deeply convinced that the interests of the German working class demanded that it should stand shoulder to shoulder with the German capitalist classes. If the German capitalist classes were threatened by the danger of collapse all else for the moment was of lesser importance, and it was essential to support the bourgeoisie. Hugo Haase turned all ways, as if his socialist conscience told him that if he voted for the war credits he was betraying every principle of socialism. On the other hand there was his fear of the revolutionary struggle, and this allowed him to betray the working class rather than sacrifice the organizational unity of the Party. Ebert stood like a rock. Throughout the war he collaborated with the imperial government. We can say that this man did not have a single moment of doubt. All attempts of the opposition in the Party to divert him from his chosen way broke against his firm will. Support of the government till the conclusion of peace, support of any move to conclude a compromise peace, decisive struggle against any revolutionary tendencies of the proletariat—this was the road along which he moved, without turning either to right or left. By this policy Ebert gained enormous confidence among the ranks of the German bourgeoisie.

When the revolution broke out, Ebert, who had continuously fought against it, passionately and energetically, Ebert, who during the January strike had joined the strike committee in order to deceive the strikers and break up the strike in the interests of imperialism, now with his characteristic firmness changed his course and took on leadership of the revolution—for one purpose only—to keep the reins in his own hands. At the earliest possible moment he obtained an understanding with the general staff, and with the civil service, gave out the slogan of law and order, and attempted to come to an understanding with the Entente with the sole

object of suppressing the revolution. In his eyes revolution was the worst thing that could happen, and it had to be suppressed as soon as possible, because revolution meant civil war, prolongation of the famine, whereas socialism, why, socialism was organization, organization and still more organization. But in his opinion organization was a possibility only thanks to 'democracy' and could only be achieved bit by bit. Therefore Ebert definitely and unequivocally aimed at taking power out of the hands of the workers' councils and putting it into the hands of the capitalists. When in January, 1918, the working masses of Berlin rose in revolt against that policy, Ebert, again without any doubts, used Noske to suppress their discontent by armed force. Noske was only a weapon in Ebert's hands—just as Ebert was merely executor of the will of the bourgeoisie.

The German bourgeoisie rewarded Ebert according to his deserts. They elected him President of the Republic. And observe, now that they consider the danger of revolution has passed, and that they can manage without the assistance of Social-Democracy, they are directing a considerable part of their efforts towards blackening both the name of Social-Democracy and of Ebert. But earlier, in 1922, I heard Stinnes utter words of the deepest esteem about Ebert. Stinnes told me, 'Ebert and Legien are the only leaders of German Social-Democracy who have a sense of responsibility and are not afraid to be consistent. Without them Germany would have perished.'

Ebert was not merely a decorative president; behind the scenes he exerted a considerable influence upon the course of events. This influence he used for three aims; to suppress revolutionary movements, to keep on good terms with the Entente, and above all to safeguard Social-Democratic influence over the State administration. This policy reflected the interests of that important class, the labour aristocracy, the trade-union bureaucracy, which occupied tens of thousands

of posts in the administrative apparatus of Germany. Though he had little personal interest in parade, Ebert observed all the ceremonials and customs in keeping with his position as president of a bourgeois republic. German workers who saw Saddler Ebert riding round in the Tiergarten attended by aides-de-camp or gracing the triumphant launches of Stinnes' new ships, could say: 'That is *our* work.'

Two million German workers perish in the imperialist war, twenty thousand workers are killed by the gangs of Whites led by Social-Democratic Noske in the civil war, seven thousand workers languish in the prisons of the Republic, ah yes, but, you see, Social-Democracy rules, and Ebert is President! Yet with bitter sorrow we have to record that there are still millions of workers in Germany who believe, though it is not very pleasant to see Ebert on horseback escorted by officers of the Junker class, still he is '*ours* and will do good.' But though leaders of the working class may forget their class, the class they have sprung from, the class which has promoted them, the bourgeoisie which uses such leaders in the moment of danger, will always when the danger is over, show that it has not forgotten where they sprang from. Those very Ludendorfs whom Ebert saved in 1918 from the revolutionary masses, those Stinnes whom he has helped to maintain in power, consider that even so there is an odour of revolution about him, and a saddler on the throne of the Hohenzollerns is a challenge to capitalist Germany.

The revolutionary workers were unable to develop a furious campaign against Ebert because the capitalist Press took it out of their hands and began to depict that faithful servant of the German capitalist fatherland to the petty-bourgeois capitalist masses, the lesser middle class, as a revolutionary betrayer of his land. The saddlers' union which Ebert organized expelled him from membership as a betrayer of the working class. The German bourgeoisie, now that death has made it

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unnecessary for them to remove him from the presidential post, will no doubt amnesty him and erect to him the monument he has deserved. He will enter the history of the working class as one of its greatest traitors, the more characteristic for not being motivated by pure self-interest. He was merely a sort of concentrate of mistrust of the working class, and it was this mistrust in the revolutionary possibilities of the proletariat that produced his servility to the bourgeoisie. The generation which has developed in the epoch of war and revolution will not produce Eberts. It will produce either honest revolutionary workers or opportunist scoundrels and unprincipled adventurers. Ebert became a scoundrel from reformism, his successors will be reformists because they are scoundrels.





## IV

# A LESSON IN HISTORY

## FOR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AND A LESSON IN HISTORY ON THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY

### *NOTE*

[It may at first thought seem out of place to include a sharp reminder addressed twelve years ago to a man who is no longer the Archbishop of Canterbury. But since his successor supports the same shocking policy of slander against the Soviet Union (notably in the campaign about the 'starving Ukraine,') and this hints that it is not the man, but actually the office of head of the Church of England that speaks so loudly in the campaign of preparation for war on the Soviet Union, Radek's essay is not in the least out of place.

Besides showing Radek at his best, with his delightful playful ironic humour, the essay may help to enlighten people as to what Marxists really do think about the 'church.' A. B.]

## A LESSON IN HISTORY

April 15th, 1923

THE English clergy headed by Thomas Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury, have issued an appeal 'against religious persecutions in Russia.' As evidence of such persecutions the English clerical brethren instance the trial of the Roman Catholic Archbishop Cepliak, the approaching trial of the Greek Orthodox Archbishop Tikhon, and, oh horror! the arrest of a rabbi in a place called Gomel (White Russia), of which we ourselves have never even heard, but about which the whole English Press is trumpeting in order to show that 'if they have come now to persecuting timid Jewish rabbis there can be no doubt that in Russia Beelzebub is indeed fighting against the archangels.'

When the production of spirituous liquors was prohibited in America, the producers of alcohol began a campaign beside which the Archbishop of Canterbury's outbursts seem but the babbling of a child.

Their most sacred sentiments and their pockets wounded, the producers of intoxicating liquor rolled out the heavy artillery of 'Freedom of American citizens,' which they said was infringed by prohibiting the manufacture of intoxicating liquor. The production of religious intoxicating liquor is not less profitable, so that we can fully understand the class solidarity manifested now between English and Russian priests. But in spite of our full sympathy with the dignified English distillers of soul spirits, we desire to point out to them that they make a whole series of errors in their assertions about religious persecution in Soviet Russia. In order to explain in popular language that in Soviet Russia there is not even talk of religious persecution, we shall adduce some instructive examples from the history of the Church of

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England, and in the first place from the history of the archbishops of Canterbury, hoping that our English comrades will expand the lecture to a whole course which would be useful not only for the Archbishop of Canterbury, but also for the English workers.

### HOW THE KINGS OF ENGLAND TAUGHT THE ENGLISH CHURCH TO OBEY THE STATE

We Communists are opponents of the liberal view of the history of the Church. It is the liberal bourgeoisie that has indiscriminatingly denied that the Church ever had any merit at all. We are not interested in wholesale priest-baiting. During the first period of the Middle Ages the Church was the seat of spiritual and technical civilization. The Church had preserved the heritage both of the Roman Empire and the early East. It taught the barbarians of Germany, a considerable part of whom had but lately left the primeval forest agriculture and crafts, and it created a system of communications between the various countries of Europe. And so there is nothing surprising in the fact that the Church insisted on its sovereignty over the barbarous medieval kingdoms, and demanded of their kings recognition of its suzerainty. But as soon as the feudal states grew stronger the struggle for superiority between them and the Church began.

The English King, Henry II, decided to put an end to the independence of the Church. He demanded that parsons should be punishable for criminal and anti-State acts on a level with other mortals. To achieve that demand he made Thomas à Becket, one of the most highly educated priests of his time, Archbishop of Canterbury. But when Thomas à Becket had once got on the archiepiscopal throne, he wanted to fleece his own sheep without any meddling from the king. He came into open conflict with Henry II, and called on his priests and the population to struggle against the king's power, masking his struggle for priestly superiority

by a cry of 'religious freedom.' Henry II, though he might be a good Catholic, of course could not remain indifferent to those priestly tricks. Thomas à Becket was obliged to flee to France, and there, getting support from England's enemies, began intrigues against his own fatherland. The Pope of Rome now got afraid lest Thomas à Becket's excessive zeal might do harm to the Church and he ordered him to come to terms with the king's authority. Thomas à Becket returned to England, and there was immediately murdered by the king's knights. Of course the king was very sorry and upset and all that by such a regrettable event, but all his public grief failed to put Thomas à Becket together again.

But even after his death Thomas à Becket kept his end up. Buried in the Cathedral of Canterbury, he began to work miracles, which at that time were still allowed. Thousands of people went to visit his grave, and the monks of Canterbury did quite well out of it. And as the Church had a good understanding how to run its business it decided to increase its income from martyrdom and the miracles of new-made saints. The English historian Rogers, one time Professor of Economics at Oxford University, and a friend of Cobden and Bright, no communist ruffian, but a member of the very temperate English liberal circles of forty years ago, in his book, *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, described as follows the deeds of the archbishops of Canterbury in business matters:

'The murder of Becket occurred in midwinter, a most inconvenient time for pilgrimage, and the monks sought for the Pope's permission to put the day of translation in mid-summer. The bargain was long and anxious. The Pope claimed half the gross profits of the shrine, and on the monks insisting that they could not carry on the business on such terms, allowed himself to accept half the net profits.' (Rogers: *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, page 359.)

Formally Henry II won the day but in reality the Church was still stronger than he, and John Lackland, poor soul, had

to enter into complete bondage to the Pope of Rome. But in course of time circumstances changed. Discord began within the Church and simultaneously with this the king's power in England became stronger. Henry VIII was more fortunate than Henry II. He not only fully subordinated the Church to himself, and declared himself its head in 1531, but took over running the Church according to all the established rules of business for profit himself. The annual income of the Church was estimated then at £320,000, half of which the king took to himself. He plundered the monasteries, grabbed all their treasures, closed down the smaller ones and dispersed the monks to the four winds of heaven. But he was clever enough not to lay a finger on the princes of the Church, but instead shared the booty with them. In a pamphlet written in the seventeenth century, at the time of the English Revolution, the author—we do not know his name, and we borrow the quotation from the excellent book on the history of the English Reformation written by Conradi—characterized 'the reformation' of Henry VIII as follows:

'Henry VIII, who by his royal authority squeezed the Pope out, had no intention of alleviating the serious condition of the population. He merely changed a foreign yoke (of the Pope of Rome) for national chains, and doing so shared the booty with his archbishops, who for their part had no use for the Pope of Rome, provided they were able to maintain their own dignities and estates.'  
(From Russian version.)

When this happened, among the pompous princes of the Church who forgot to cry out about religious freedom, but on the contrary squirmed on his belly before the despot of England, was the predecessor of our present advocate of 'religious freedom,' Archbishop Cranmer of Canterbury. This holy man went so far in his subservience to the king that

he dissolved the marriage between Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon—which marriage had been consecrated by the Pope of Rome himself. The king had cast his eye on a simpering miss named Anne Boleyn, and the archbishop of Canterbury decided that all the Church dogmas and all the rulings of its head, the Pope of Rome, might make a comfortable pillow for his lascivious king. Even when Henry VIII got tired of Anne Boleyn and decided to have her put to death in order to take the next into his arms, the archbishop of Canterbury had no objections. That did not conflict with ‘freedom of religion,’ that was merely ‘freedom of love,’ hallowed for good hard cash by the archbishop of Canterbury.

From this time on the English kings stopped struggling against the Church. On the contrary they defended it most heartily. And when in the democratic strata of English society a movement began which—God forbid—did not struggle for the abolition of religion, but only for some reduction of the unprecedented power of the bishops over the souls of their flocks, James I in 1604 (after the Millenary petition,) let slip the following words to a deputation of four Puritans whom he received at Hampton Court:

‘If this be all your Party hath to say, I will make them conform themselves, or else I will harrie them out of the Land or else do worse, *only hang them*, that’s all.’ (The very language of the Holy Spirit, according to Bishop Whitgift)—(cf., Oldmixon; *The History of England under the Stuarts.*)

Is it to be wondered at that since that episode the bishops have stood side by side with the English kings? ‘Defend us with the sword and we shall defend you with the pen,’ they jointly declared in 1624.\*

\* Hallam: *Constitutional History of England* says of this (1871 edition, p. 215): ‘In the accounts that we read of this meeting, we are alternately struck with wonder at the indecent and partial behaviour of the king, and at the abject baseness of the bishops, mixed, according to the custom of servile natures, with insolence towards their opponents.—(A. B.)

Let us sum up some points of this first chapter of our history lesson. At first the Church endeavoured to establish domination over the propertied classes. For that the heads of archbishops of Canterbury were cut off. But when the feudal power, kings and landowners, had reduced the Church to servile obedience, had robbed the lower clergy, had shared the loot with the archbishops and bishops, with the kings of the Church, then these defenders of the faith not only catered for every caprice of the king's, not only became lackeys of the tyranny of the landowners, but even allowed the kings to interfere in the affairs of religion and the Church and determine what religion was.

One fact more. A considerable part of the property belonging to the present English aristocracy had its origin in the plundering of Church property by Henry VIII, who awarded it to secular and ecclesiastical magnates. And now that the descendants of those pillagers cry out about 'pillage' of Church property and protest against such 'sacrilege' in the name of religion, every class-conscious English worker must be laughing in their face.

But, the Archbishop of Canterbury may ask, 'Why do you republicans, you revolutionaries, imitate the feudal kings?'

Allow me, my dear sir, first of all to point out that you have never repudiated that feudal past in which the archbishops of Canterbury played such a prominent part. And yet don't you consider that your present appeal has a special significance just because you are a lineal descendant of the ancient archbishops of England? But to speak plainly, what the Soviet Government is doing has nothing whatever in common with what the feudal kings did to the Church, to which acts too your Church submitted as soon as it saw that the king had a heavy fist. The Council of People's Commissars has not declared itself to be the head of the Church. It does not want to appoint bishops and is not going to introduce thirty-one articles for the Church as Henry VIII did. The



Soviet Government allows every citizen to believe what he wants, and to carry on religious propaganda, just as it leaves anti-religious citizens the right to carry on anti-religious propaganda. It does not interfere with the internal affairs of the Church; it only insists that the parsons do what all citizens have to do—obey the laws of the republic.

Henry VIII robbed the Church to make presents to his concubines, to archbishops and to the nobles. The English Church kept silence when her dignitaries received bribes from the king. The Soviet Government ordered confiscation of Church valuables in order to feed people dying of famine. The Cepliaks and Tikhons who used to grovel before tsarism rebelled against the measures taken by the Soviet Government in its attempt to save millions of people from starving to death. And the archbishop of Canterbury who defends them is a worthy successor to that archbishop of Canterbury named Cranmer who trampled underfoot the orders of the head of his Church, the Pope of Rome, in order to gratify the king's whims. The archbishop of Canterbury refers to 'the freedom of religion.' We shall for that reason remind him of another chapter from the history of the archbishops of Canterbury.

#### HOW THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY DEFENDED FREEDOM OF RELIGION AGAINST INSURRECTIONARY PEASANTS AND WORKERS

This happened in the fourteenth century. The English Church was in a state of deep disintegration. The monks from the lowest to the highest were disorderly and immoral. They robbed the population right and left. Much of their takings they sent to the Pope who was then the tool of the French kings. A movement began against that even among educated circles, which was headed by Wycliffe, himself a priest and a professor of the University of Oxford. Wycliffe demanded separation of the English Church from Rome, and

urged that parsons should live humbly, as tradition says Jesus Christ did. This preaching of Wycliffe met with sympathy among the textile workers, who were very badly off and disliked being fleeced by the priests. It also found strong response among the peasantry whom both priests and landowners kept skinned right to the bone. There began the so-called Lollard movement to which was affiliated also a part of the poorest clergy with John Ball at their head. In John Ball's preaching is reflected the struggle against the exploitation of the landowners. Here is how one of his contemporaries, Jean Froissart, reports one of John Ball's speeches:

'My good friends, matters cannot go on well in England until all things shall be in common; when there shall be neither vassals nor lords; when the lords shall be no more masters than ourselves. How ill they behave to us! for what reason do they thus hold us to bondage? Are we not all descended from the same parents, Adam and Eve? And what can they show, or what reason can they give, why they should be more masters than ourselves? They are clothed in velvet and rich stuffs, ornamented with ermine and other fur, while we are forced to wear poor clothing. They have wines, and spices, and fine bread, while we have only rye and the refuse of the straw; and when we drink, it must be water. They have abundant seats and manors, while we must brave the wind and rain in our labours in the field; and it is by our labour they have wherewith to support their pomp. We are called slaves, and if we do not perform our service we are beaten, and we have no sovereign to whom we can complain or who would be willing to hear us.' (Everyman edition, pp. 207, 208.)

There is nothing against religion in this speech. On the contrary, John Ball refers to the Gospel. But the archbishops of Canterbury declared this speech to be sacrilegious, and ordered John Ball to be imprisoned and excommunicated. In this way John Ball did not get off too badly but thousands of Lollards were burned at the stake and the main role in the persecution of the Lollards was played by the then archbishop

of Canterbury, Arundel. The moderate liberal English professor Rogers writes of him:

'He is noted for having secured the Statute *De heretico comburendo*, under which the sheriff in the county, and the chief magistrate in towns was compelled to carry out the ecclesiastical sentence of death pronounced by the bishop. With detestable hypocrisy churchmen pretended that they could not take life; and, therefore, in a statute accepted by the king at the instance of the clergy, but not agreed by Parliament, they put on others the duties which they declined. He also procured another statute, under which, on the pretence of silencing heretical preachers, the inferior clergy were obliged to take out a licence for preaching, and to pay a fee for the privilege. This, we are told, was made the means by which the king was kept in ignorance of popular discontent consequent on mis-government' (*op. cit.* p. 370).

The history of the archbishops of Canterbury comes out like this:

When the king appoints himself head of the Church, when he decides on its teaching, and even when he picks its pocket a little, it is all 'freedom of religion' provided any proceeds are shared between the king and the archbishop. But when earnest believers, workers or peasants, basing themselves upon the Gospel, want the priesthood to renounce luxury, gluttony and drunkenness, want them to live together with the mass of the nation, that is sacrilege, for which the archbishop of Canterbury sends thousands of working people to death.

Now it is clear why the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Davidson, in 1923, just after the reputed birth of his 'Christ,' fights for the same causes that his predecessors fought for in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. The itinerant priest, John Ball, who in the clumsy language of the fourteenth century declared the truths of communism, was as hateful to the archbishop of Canterbury of the fourteenth century as the 'agents' of Moscow are to the archbishop of Canterbury of the twentieth century. How could the archbishops of

Canterbury not defend Tikhon, that champion of the dominion of tsars, landowners and capitalists? Thomas Davidson, archbishop of Canterbury, is influenced by something more than hatred for the Lollard movement now it has revived in the twentieth century and triumphed in faraway Russia. He comes out not only in sympathy for the *Russian* landowners and capitalists. . . . We must conclude our lecture in history with a leaf from our present time.

## THE IMPERISHABLE RELIQUIÆ OF SAINT LESLIE

Once upon a time there lived a faithful child of the Church of England, an Englishman named Leslie Andrew Urquhart. Just as in ancient times faithful monks went out into wild places, among peoples ignorant of the use of shirt or trousers, in order to spread faith in the immortality of the soul and its provenance from God whether or not its nakedness was covered, so too did this Saint Urquhart, a man tonsured in the Church of capital, go forth into the savage land of Muscovy there by deeds of his faith to spread belief in the might of his god, 'capital.' And like all priests in that country, Mr Leslie Andrew Urquhart was cared for so well in bodily comforts that he cannot open his lips to speak of it now save as of a paradise lost. But this holy man suffered great disdain at the hands of the Russian natives. When they revolted against tsar, landlord and the god, 'capital,' they also drove Leslie away from his factories and other properties.

Now not all saints are patient. Many of the saints of old took sword in hand and fought like common slaughterers. Saint Leslie was not among the patient. He made straight for Kolchak and with all the force at his disposal attempted to wrest from our hands that national wealth we had relieved him of. When that failed he led a holy crusade against Soviet Russia. His spirit inspired all the literary toadies of capitalist England to demand the destruction of that nest of robbers and enemies of 'God.' But when Soviet Russia conquered, Saint

Leslie went into retreat, and in a vision saw that forgiveness was the proper duty of a saint. So he tried to do a deal with us. He declared he would share the loot with the devil and promise to serve him sincerely and honestly.

But the Soviet devils, having read the proposed contract, decided that Saint Leslie was trying to sell them a pup, and rejected it, and so the saintly man took his seat in his monkly cell at the London Stock Exchange and began to wait for the Bolshevik rascals to mend their ways. And a hundred times he had promised to wait patiently, but when the trial of Cepliak and the execution of Butkievitch raised a dust the holy one could stand it no more. He gathered together the injured English creditors of Russia and proposed to them that they demand the breaking off of relations with Soviet Russia, not only because of the persecutions of the 'holy' Church but also because trade with Russia brought so little profit. For such small takings there was no use in having to do with the Bolshevik devil.

Leslie Andrew Urquhart, as we have said, was a saintly man and one able to work miracles. When therefore he was despondent, Clynes, a leader of the British Labour Party, despatched telegrams beseeching the Soviet Government not to offend that apostle of the god 'capital.' Now when Saint Leslie thinks that by a little pressure it might be possible to wring concessions from the Soviet Government, we find the Archbishop of Canterbury sets up a wail about the scorned rights of the Catholic, Jewish and Greek orthodox religions.

#### A PIECE OF ADVICE FOR SAINT LESLIE

Mr Urquhart, don't poke your fingers in the crack of the door because they will get pinched. And then, just as after Kolchak's fall, you will again have to change your religion; go on waiting. The human heart is not made of stone and patience is its own reward.

## A LESSON IN HISTORY

### A PIECE OF ADVICE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Most Reverend Thomas Davidson, I, a man claiming no competence in Church affairs, have delivered you a lecture in history. If you tell too many lies, the Communist International will appoint two of its experts to write a history of the archbishopric of Canterbury which will make you feel sorry for yourself. As in Great Britain to-day it is not possible to burn people at the stake for doing such things, the rascally British Communists will publish this history in full, with a complete report of your sins and of those of your predecessors, not sparing even their illegitimate offspring, and the history will be published in millions of copies. Now, just think, what is the point of it all? You just take it steady at home, eat plenty of pudding, drink stout, read some nice thrillers if you don't find them too boring, and leave Soviet Russia at peace.



## V

# LLOYD GEORGE

### NOTE

[One of the most puzzling features of Marxism-Leninism to those who do not understand what it is about (and do not trouble to find out—the sources are published in English and are free for all to examine) is the frequent talk of correct or incorrect policy. This is taken to mean obedience or non-obedience to ‘party bosses’—and to be similar to the heresy-hunting in which, for example, the Strict and Particular Baptists or the British Labour Party Executive Committee love to dabble.

The Marxist search for accuracy is nothing of this sort. It is plainly a matter of proper and verifiable observation of the facts, and drawing of conclusions therefrom in a scientific manner—that is, in the light of experience. No better proof of this possibility of such appraisal can be found than the examination of old statements by representative Marxists, and comparing them with bourgeois estimates made at the same time, but merely on the basis of instinct, intuition, flair, hopes, wisdom or any other quack method.

Readers who happen to have old newspapers at hand will not find many estimates of Lloyd George’s historical significance made in 1922 so ‘correct’ or fresh to-day as this one of Radek’s. His latest role of Fascist demagogue in the style of Roosevelt with his ‘New Deal’ serves, at the moment of going to press, as a fine clinching of Radek’s argument. A. B.]



# LLOYD GEORGE

October 21st, 1922

After sixteen years of participation in the British Parliament, and six years' leadership of the British Government, Lloyd George has resigned. His resignation has come as a result of a vote taken in the Carlton Club, which is an organization of the leading groups of the Conservative Party. This club of the financial capitalist oligarchy which rules Great Britain has declared by a majority of about two-thirds for an immediate general election, in which the Conservative Party has decided to come out as an independent party. And in that country which considers itself so democratic this was sufficient for the premier, Lloyd George, the only real capitalist class politician in Europe, a man who has shown some sort of glimmerings of understanding the international situation, to be obliged to resign. The defeat of Lloyd George is an historical fact of the first importance. We can only appraise it properly if we make some attempt to sketch at least in broad outline a picture of the political development of England during the past thirty years.

Lloyd George, who was son of a village schoolmaster, and was brought up by a cobbler uncle in an out-of-the-way corner of Britain, grew up in an ambience of petty middle-class radicalism. The farmers and farm labourers, shopkeepers and craftsmen of Wales belonged to the Free Baptist Church, were opponents of the Church being an appendage of the State—were petty middle-class democrats. Lloyd George was brought up on their discussions and their struggle against payment of taxes for the national Church (tithe). His uncle, the shoemaker, was a Baptist preacher, and Lloyd George prepared to follow in uncle's footsteps. But as the Baptists insisted on their preachers plying some trade, Lloyd

George articulated himself to a little country lawyer, and, as he learned the business in practice, prepared for the necessary examinations. At the same time he travelled about all over the country agitating. From infancy he had been very poor and till quite recently in meditative moments used to recall the hard labours of his mother, who had been obliged by the death of her husband to bring up her family by her own hands: these memories were the original source of his social reformist aims.

In 1890, when twenty-eight years old, he got into Parliament as Member for Carnarvonshire, in which county he had been brought up. He carried on a lawyer's practice in London, and shared a single room with his partner. He was so poor that he had difficulty in starting his practice, simply because he had not the three pounds required to buy the official black gown required in court. The man who shared his room with him at that time relates that he never heard such passionate accusations of the capitalist system as in those years from Lloyd George's lips.

In the years in which Lloyd George began to appear on the political arena of his country, that country was going through a serious internal crisis. The period of Manchesterism, that period in which the whole British bourgeoisie stood for free trade, for liberal and peaceful relations with all countries, and for preservation of Britain's isolation—was passing. The rivalry of Germany and the development of American capitalism had begun to drive the capitalist class on to the path of open imperialism. In the years immediately following the repeal of the Corn Laws (1846) Britain had been the only powerful capitalist country, and could be confident in the victorious forces of her cheap goods. For that reason the capitalist class was then against seizing any new colonies and against protective tariffs. But in Lloyd George's early political days, with protective tariffs winning the day in literally all European countries and in America, British goods came on

competition everywhere, and a strong movement towards binding Britain to the British colonies by a customs barrier grew up.

At the same time appeared and grew a consciousness of the need to increase the navy in order to defend existing colonies and seize new ones. At the head of this movement was Joseph Chamberlain, and this movement steadily gained ground with the bourgeoisie of Britain. The Boer War was one of the results of this policy. Lloyd George came forward as a fiery opponent of the Boer War. Throughout it he fought magnificently against jingoism, against the 'religion of blood and iron,' against the religion of imperialist brigandage. Time after time he spoke at meetings and faced the infuriated mob and its attacks.

Chamberlain's policy did not lead to Chamberlain's own aim. The interests of the agrarian colonies of Britain, which wanted to obtain industrial products, no matter where from if cheap, presented one of the principal barriers to the economic unification of the British Empire. The interests of the working class of Britain, and of the petty middle class, worked in the same direction. The petty middle class of Britain in spite of the high level of capitalist development there, had been preserved better than the petty middle class of other countries—mainly thanks to the cheapness of necessities. Cheap food was the means by which the bourgeoisie killed the revolutionary aims of the working class. Chamberlain's policy threatened higher prices, and the working masses were against it.

Then the merchant section of the British bourgeoisie and the British textile industry (which, thanks to the cheapness of its goods, still maintained markets) made use of these broad masses of the working class and the petty middle class and began a struggle against the imperialist protectionist policy. That is to say, Manchester, principal centre of the textile industry, was at war with Birmingham and Sheffield—centres

of the metallurgical industries, which are the principal foundation of imperialism. In 1906 the policy of the liberal section of the bourgeoisie and of petty middle-class radicalism won the day. Lloyd George, as one of the leaders of this policy, entered the Government as President of the Board of Trade. By 1908 he held one of the most important posts in the Government—that of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and there he remained till 1916. Lloyd George's first years with that portfolio are his heroic years.

Against the slogan of the imperialists, according to which the protective tariff would assure the workers higher wages while foreign competitors would fill the British treasury by customs duties, Lloyd George put forward rigorous taxation of the bigger capitalists and the aristocracy. In opposition to the imperialist idea of arming he put the idea of social reform which should improve the conditions of the broad masses of the working classes. On April 29th, 1909, he introduced his budget with a four-hour speech which ended with the words:

‘This is a War Budget. It is for raising money to wage implacable warfare on poverty and squalidness.’ (*Better Times*, p. 143.)

To give an idea of the spirit of Lloyd George's agitation at this time, here are two extracts from his speeches:

‘We are still confronted with the more gigantic task of dealing with the rest—the sick, the infirm, the unemployed, the widows, and the orphans. No country can lay any real claim to civilization that allows them to starve. Starvation is a punishment that society has ceased to inflict for centuries on its worst criminals, and at its most barbarous stage humanity never starved the children of the criminal.

‘But what happens to-day in the working of the great economic machine? A workman breaks down in his prime, and permanently loses his power of earning a livelihood. He has done his best to contribute to the common stock,

and he can do no more. Why should he be allowed to starve and his children to die of hunger in this land of super-abundant plenty?' (*Better Times*, p. 53. Speech at Swansea, October 1st, 1908.)

In another speech we find him saying that he:

. . . would like parliaments to be lighthouses thrusting their rays into the dark corners of society—to show up all misery, all injustice, all enslavement that the present situation cannot last much longer. That the contradiction between the wealth and luxury of one class and the misery and degradation of the other is too great, that one works far too much and is obliged to starve, the other idles away all his life and spends his time banqueting, that this cannot go on any longer, that justice and mercy have always been the great mainsprings of government, and that the system which paves the street of luxury with the hearts of the suffering masses is doomed to destruction.

This is the spirit of all the speeches of Lloyd George of this period, collected in a book *Better Times*, a book which can be taken as a model for propaganda. The bourgeoisie began to shout about Lloyd George's socialism.

Lloyd George never has been a socialist. He never has wanted the destruction of capitalism. He was never more than a radical of the petty middle class who wanted the abolition of land rents and the limitation of profits. The Lloyd George budget produced a passionate struggle on the part of the House of Lords. And without any right to do this, the Lords rejected the Lloyd George budget as one which destroyed the foundations of the kingdom. New elections gave the Liberal Party the majority again. Lloyd George passed his budget through and a whole series of social laws too.

But the period of petty middle-class radical victories passed, the period of capitalist social reform; Britain rejected Chamberlain's imperialist policy, but yet could not keep far from the current of imperialism. In 1902, when Britain concluded

a treaty with Japan against Russia, which threatened British imperialism in Central Asia, it started on new and rapid arming. After Russia's downfall, Britain found itself face to face with German imperialism, freed from the domination of tsarist Russia, and busy constructing a fleet. In 1904 there began the intimacy between Britain and France which behind the back of the people of Britain became the Entente, which was merely an Anglo-French alliance against Germany. The construction of dreadnoughts, the most powerful line ships, intended to maintain British superiority, improved the chances of German imperialism, since it lessened the significance of the older types of vessel in which Britain was superior.

The attempts of Asquith's government (which had come in place of Campbell Bannerman's after his death) to come to an understanding with Germany as to limitation of armaments, brought no result. British imperialism would not consent to renounce its demands for Britain to have a fleet equal to the two most powerful fleets of the world. Petty middle-class radicalism could not maintain its pacifist position. And when, in 1911, Germany sent a warship, the *Panther*, to Agadir, on the west coast of Morocco, to make clear to all the world that it would not allow France and Britain to hold back the expansion of German imperialism, Asquith's Liberal government came out in defence of the interests of the British Empire. A German base on the west coast of Morocco would have threatened the sea routes by which Britain transported her raw materials and foodstuffs.

During the Morocco crisis Lloyd George came out with his famous speech in which he—leader of petty middle-class reformist pacifism—threatened Germany with war. This speech of Lloyd George's marks not only the turning-point of Mr Lloyd George's personal history, but also the turning-point of the history of contemporary British liberalism. It was the capitulation of petty middle-class pacifism before the interests of heavy industry, the interests of grabbing im-

perialism. When the Liberal Government of Britain in July of 1914 found itself face to face with a world war it had already long cast choice aside. On August 3rd in the House of Commons, the Foreign Secretary of the Liberal Government, Grey, announced that Britain was under no obligations, but that the general staff of Britain had moral obligations towards that of France; yet but actually the question of the participation of Britain in the war had long been decided. 'The defence of Belgium' was only an excuse. Britain could not allow the most powerful manufacturing country of Europe to win the war, and so it entered the imperialist war.

In this war Lloyd George the 'pacifist' and 'social reformist' occupied the post of Minister of Munitions. And became the soul of the Allied Powers. He mobilized all Britain's forces and organized them for war with the very same passion with which so recently he had been waging a war for social reforms against poverty.

In this work of organization of war industries he came into close touch with the leading groups of British heavy industry—that is to say, of British imperialism. And in 1916 they made him Premier of a Coalition Government which included not merely commercial capital, small industries and heavy industries, but even the leaders of the 'Labour Party' too. In the Government of Lloyd George there was the leader of the 'Labour Party,' Mr Henderson, helping Lloyd George persuade the workers to decline all social reforms and put all their energies into a struggle for victory. Lloyd George became the pet of British capital and its most useful asset. Nobody could organize so well, or persuade the masses of the nation that it was not a war for capitalist profits, but for democracy and for equal rights of development for all! Nobody could beat Lloyd George at keeping down every attempt to end the war by a bargain of compromise with Germany. When Britain had succeeded in drawing America into the war, Lloyd George turned Henderson out of the Cabinet because that

leader of the Labour Party in his fear of the pacifist aims of the workers, actually dared to consent to the calling of a conference in Stockholm of social patriots, whose job it was to find an imperialist compromise between two warring imperialist groups.

In November, 1918, the Allied Powers defeated Germany. Lloyd George was at the apogee of his fame, and liberalism lay prostrate with broken limbs.

With that intuition he possesses, Lloyd George knew very well that the conclusion of the war was pregnant with tremendous dangers for international capitalism. He saw the conflagration of the Russian revolution, and understood that now the working-class masses coming home from the front were going to put forward their demands. And it was understanding this that he tried at all costs to maintain the unity of the capitalist classes. He came out most decisively against those liberals who wished to restore the independence of the Liberal Party at the coming elections.

When a fraction of these liberals, led by Asquith, came out at the elections as 'independent liberals,' he smashed them. At the December elections of 1918 the liberals who were against the coalition got thirty-one seats, the conservatives 358, and the coalition liberals 124. There were 5,295,000 votes for the coalition, while the 'independent' liberals got only 1,298,000. This coalition victory did not only express the intoxication of victory, or the thirst to make Germany pay the whole cost of the war, but also the profound shift of social forces which had taken place during the war. British industry, which had been very badly organized up to the war, was now united in powerful organizations, which held politics firmly in their power. Lloyd George became representative of the most speculative currents of British capitalism.

Where the anonymous author of a small book about the leading British politicians—*The Mirror of Downing*



*Street\**—speaks of the way Lloyd George surrounded himself with 'dubious persons' (the anonymous author is hinting at the friendly relations between Lloyd George and certain speculators such as Zaharoff) we must add that this moral decay is expressive of the fact that war speculators became one of the leading powers in capitalist Britain. Lloyd George was their prisoner. That is why, when he saw clearly that the brigandish Versailles Treaty would be the starting-point for new armaments and new wars (and he foretold this in a memorandum to the leaders of the Versailles conference) he could not decide to take up the struggle against those imperialist brigandist aims—because now that he had smashed the petty middle-class Liberal Party to smithereens, his only support in Parliament was the chauvinist imperialist majority.

All Lloyd George's policy after Versailles, both in home and foreign affairs, has been full of contradictions, bearing in mind that the imperialist side has always got the upper hand. In regard to the working class Lloyd George plays the part of master conjurer. All his cares are concentrated on one aim—fooling the workers and lulling them to sleep. When, in the early days of 1919, the coal miners demanded nationalization of the mines, he appointed a Royal Commission, which for six months carried on a public enquiry into the rights of the coal kings to exploit the miners. This commission called out great enthusiasm in the masses of the workers, and when their leader Smillie proved to the Duke of Northumberland that the only foundation for that person's right to keep workers in slavery was a scrap of paper of a minor king of the sixteenth century, they were delighted.

The Commission declared for nationalization. But by this time the danger was already over, and Lloyd George was able to put his fingers to his nose at the miners. All his promises

\* *The Mirror of Downing Street*, by 'A Gentleman with a Duster'; 1920. The author has since been identified as Harold Begbie—at least, the British Museum Library catalogues the book under this name.—(A. B.)

about opening the path to democracy turned out to be the most blatant demagoguery. Never in the history of Britain had such a tiny clique as that clique led by Premier Lloyd George led 'democracy.'

In foreign policy Lloyd George had a definite line too. He was quite clear that Britain had a most threatening rival in powerful America, and was struggling for hegemony on the Continent with France, which had an army of 800,000 and a whole chain of alliances at its disposal—and that Britain too had ceased to have a monopoly of the seas—and therefore Britain had now to look for support to Germany and Russia.

He was against intervention in Russia, just as he was against crushing Germany. But he was now the prisoner of the forces of imperialism and so he was forced to go on repeating like a parrot 'Germany must pay!' 'The Soviet bandits must be destroyed.'

But very soon it appeared that Germany could not pay, and the 'Soviet bandits' had very strong claws and were not easily given to having salt put on their tails. Lloyd George took advantage of the victory of the Soviets to call off the intervention and to conclude a commercial treaty with them. But he was not powerful enough to compel the British Government to be honourable in that compromise with Soviet Russia. He was not powerful enough to prevent his own Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, an exponent of the Beaconsfield policy of weakening Russia, from putting a spoke in the wheel.

At the Genoa conference he (Lloyd George) came forward with a programme which made compromise impossible, because first he called a conference with the slogan of European reconstruction, and then demanded from Russia that Russia should undertake a burden which would have made her a colony of the Allies. He attempted to obtain a revision of the allied demands on Germany. Behind the scenes he tried to persuade France to renounce cutting the throat of the

German goose which he would have liked to lay so many golden eggs. But whenever France countered with threats of an independent policy towards Germany, he gave way, because the imperialist elements of Britain were afraid of the collapse of the Entente, as a leap into the unknown.

In his swan song, his Manchester speeches, Lloyd George even hinted at a glimmer of understanding of the insanity of British policy towards Turkey. But yet it was he who carried it into effect, and the bankruptcy of that policy was the stone over which at last he stumbled and fell.

The eastern crisis and the collapse of the policy of the British Government in regard to it were merely the last push which toppled him over. The immediate causes of his fall were two; firstly, the intensification in the British capitalist classes of the reactionary imperialist current, which was a result of the war, and which made them feel they did not any longer need the Lloyd George mask, and, secondly, the dangerous situation abroad in which British imperialism found itself placed in the Near East and in Asia, where all the forces of revolutionary colonial nationalism were now mobilizing against it.

Difficulties in the Far East, where British imperialism is afraid of finding itself on the floor through trying to sit on both the Japanese and American stools at the same time; complications on the Continent, where Britain had already found herself standing over the abyss of a break with France; the growing independence of the colonies; and the profound economic difficulties in regard to allied debts and the new tariff policy of the U.S.A.—all these difficulties demanded a firm policy. The conservatives were willing to pay the price of doing without Mr Lloyd George's brilliant mind in order to have a firm hand at the helm, even if that hand were to be guided by a stupid brain.

With the defeat of Lloyd George there vanishes from the scene of history—for the time being at least—the last really

gifted leader of imperialism, the last leader who, though he had constructive ideas for the salvation of capitalism, had no power behind him with which to carry those ideas into being. The capitalists now have need of stupid but strong politicians. But even these will not save them, because capitalism cannot be restored without any leading idea, it cannot be done by sheer brute force. The fall of Lloyd George will result in clearing the way for new groupings; and it will result in a great sharpening of international relationships.



## VI

# A NOTE TO PRESIDENT WILSON

### *NOTE*

[It would be a mistake to read this note written by Radek for the Soviet Government in October, 1918, and look on it merely as an historical document. When one remembers what Radek insists on—that at this time Wilson had captured the hearts of millions by his self-determination talk—that at this very same time it was in his power to withdraw U.S.A. support from the counter-revolutionary forces—it ought to be clearer than ever how impossible it is for the capitalist world to be at peace with the Soviet Union.

The manœuvring of the various capitalist groups incessantly has as mainspring the hope of forming a sufficiently powerful alliance sufficiently cleverly made to succeed in bamboozling the peoples of the capitalist countries into an attack on the Soviet Union (disguised as defence). These preparations are no myth. A. B.]

# A NOTE TO PRESIDENT WILSON

October 25th, 1918

*To Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America.*

Mr President,

In your address to the Senate of the United States of America on January 18th you expressed, in paragraph 6, your deep sympathy with Russia, which at that time was carrying on negotiations face to face with powerful German imperialism. Your programme, you said, is to secure the liberation of the entire Russian territory, and such a solution of all questions affecting Russia as would guarantee her the most complete and free assistance from other nations in securing full and unhindered opportunity for adopting an independent decision in regard to her own political development and her national life as would secure for her—whatever be the form of government she may choose for herself—a warm reception into the family of free nations, and further every assistance she may need or may seek. And you also added that ‘the attitude’ which the other great powers take toward Russia in the course of the coming months will be the touchstone of their good faith towards her, of their understanding of her needs as distinct from their private interests, as well as of their wisdom and the unselfishness of their sympathies.

The desperate struggle in which we were engaged at Brest Litovsk against German imperialism evidently only increased your sympathies for Soviet Russia, since to the Congress of Soviets which under the threat of a German offensive ratified the outrageous Treaty of Brest Litovsk, you sent your greetings and the assurance that Soviet Russia could depend on the help of America.

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Six months have passed since then and the people of Russia have had ample time to test by experience the good feelings entertained toward them by your government and those of your allies, as well as your understanding of Russia's needs, your wisdom and the unselfishness of your sympathies.

This attitude of your government and of your allies towards the Russian people first of all manifested itself in the fact that with the financial assistance of your French allies and with the diplomatic aid of your own government a plot was organized upon Russian territory by the Czechoslovaks to whom your government is rendering all possible aid. For some time attempts have been made to create a pretext for war between Russia and the United States of America by the circulation of stories to the effect that German prisoners of war had seized the Trans-Siberian Railway, though your own officers and later Colonel Robins, the head of your Red Cross Mission, were able to confirm that the whole thing was pure invention. The Czechoslovak uprising was organized under the pretext of saving those unfortunate dupes from being delivered into the hands of Germany and Austria. But from the open letter of Captain Sadoul, member of the French Military Mission, among other things you can learn how completely this invention is devoid of any foundation in fact. The only reason why the Czechoslovaks did not leave Russia in the new year is that the French Government did not provide boats for their transport. For several months we waited in vain for your allies to enable the Czechoslovaks to leave. But it is clear that to these governments it was much more desirable that the Czechoslovaks should stay in Russia—for what purpose, later events showed—than that they should go to France to participate in the war on the French front. The true character of the Czechoslovak uprising is best shown by the fact that, when they had got the Trans-Siberian Railway in their hands, they did not use it to leave by, but under orders of the governments of the Entente



Powers, which were directing them, preferred to make themselves the main support of the Russian counter-revolution.

Their counter-revolutionary insurrection, which has rendered the transport of grain and oil up the Volga impossible, has cut off the workers and peasants of Russia from the corn and other supplies of Siberia and has condemned them to starvation. This is the first thing that the workers and peasants of Russia have experienced in practice from your government and that of your allies after the promises made by you in the beginning of the year.

And immediately after that they experienced something more, namely, the invasion of the north of Russia by the troops of your allies, with the participation of American troops; the occupation of Russian territory without any pretext and without any declaration of war, the execution of Soviet officials, and all manner of acts of violence perpetrated upon the peaceful population of Russia.

You, Mr President, promised to help Russia to secure full and unhindered opportunity for the adoption by her of independent decisions with regard to her own political development and her national life. But in reality this assistance showed in the fact that the Czechoslovak troops and soon afterwards your own troops and those of your allies, at Archangel, in Murmansk, in the Far East, attempted to force on the Russian people the government of those oppressors, of those exploiting classes whose yoke the workers and peasants of Russia had thrown off as far back as October of the previous year. The revival of the Russian counter-revolution, which had already been reduced to a corpse, attempts by means of violence to re-establish its bloody dominion over the people of Russia—that is what the latter experienced instead of that help to express their will unhindered which was promised them, Mr President, in your declarations.

You also promised the Russian people, Mr President, to help them in their struggle for independence. But what

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actually happened was, when the Russian people were engaged on the southern front in a struggle against the counter-revolutionaries who had sold themselves to German imperialism and were threatening the independence of the Russian people; and when on their western front the Russian people were straining all their energies for the organization of the defence of their territory, they were obliged to throw their troops to the east against the Czechoslovaks who were bringing them oppression and enslavement, and to the north against the troops of your allies and your own troops, which had invaded the territory of the Russian people, and against the counter-revolution that was being organized by those troops.

The touchstone of events applied to the relations between the United States and Russia has not given exactly the kind of results that one would have expected after your message to Congress, Mr President. But we have cause to be not entirely dissatisfied even with these results, because the outrages of the counter-revolution in the east and in the north have shown the Russian workers and peasants what the Russian counter-revolution and its foreign supporters are aiming at, and as a result of this there has been created among the Russian masses an iron will to defend their freedom, the conquests of the revolution, to defend the soil which has now been given to the peasants, and the factories, which have now been given to the workers. After the fall of Kazan, Simbirsk, Syzran and Samara, the consequences for you of the deeds into which were translated the promises made by you on January 18th, must be clear to you, too, Mr President. What we have gone through has helped us to create a firmly-welded, disciplined Red Army which is growing every day in strength and power and is learning to defend the revolution.

The attitude towards us which your Government and your allies have actually shown could not destroy us. On the contrary, we are stronger now than we were some months ago and the international negotiations for a general peace, which

you are now proposing, find us active and strong and permit us in the name of Russia to express our agreement to participate in them.

As a condition for the armistice, during which peace negotiations are to begin, in your note to Germany you have stipulated that troops must be withdrawn from occupied territories. We are quite ready, Mr President, to conclude an armistice on these conditions and we request you to inform us when you, Mr President, and your allies intend to remove your troops from Murmansk, from Archangel, and from Siberia. You are not prepared, Mr President, to grant an armistice unless, while withdrawing her troops from the territories occupied by her, Germany abstains from outrages, looting, etc. From this we make so bold as to conclude that you and your allies will order the Czechoslovaks to return to us that part of our gold reserve which they stole in Kazan; that during their forced withdrawal—because we shall give energetic assistance to their speedy withdrawal without waiting for your orders—you will forbid them to continue their bandit activities and from committing against the workers and peasants acts of violence such as they have heretofore committed.

As to your further peace conditions, namely, that the governments which conclude the peace must be representative of the will of the masses of the people, our government, as you are aware, completely fulfils this requirement. Our Government expresses the will of the Soviets of Workers, Peasants, and Red Army Deputies, representing at least eighty per cent. of the Russian people; which, Mr President, is more than can be said of your Government. But we in the name of peace and humanity do not make it a condition of general peace negotiations that all peoples participating in them must necessarily be represented by a Council of People's Commissars, elected at Congresses of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies. We know that this form

of government will soon be the universal form and that it is exactly such a general peace, saving the peoples from complete destruction, that will untie their hands and enable them to demolish that social order and destroy those caucuses which precipitated humanity into a world war, and which, in spite of themselves, will doubtless lead the tortured masses of the world to establish Soviet governments, exactly expressive of their will.

While agreeing at present to participate in negotiations even with governments which do not as yet express the will of their people, we, on our side, would like to learn from you, Mr President, exactly how you picture to yourself that League of Nations which in your opinion must crown the work of peace. You demand the independence of Poland, Serbia and Belgium, and freedom for the peoples of Austria-Hungary. Probably you mean by this that the common people must first everywhere take the decision of their own destinies, in order later on to unite in a free League of Nations. But, strangely enough, we do not notice in your demands any mention of freedom for Ireland, Egypt, India or even for Finland. And we should very much like these peoples to have the opportunity of participating together with us, through their freely elected representatives, in the establishment of the League of Nations.

We should also very much like, Mr President, before the beginning of the negotiations for the establishment of this League of Nations, to learn how you yourself picture the solution of many questions of an economic character which have a substantial bearing on the cause of future peace. You make no mention of the war expenditures, of that crushing burden which, unless the League of Nations renounces the payment of loans due to the capitalists of all countries, will be placed upon the shoulders of the common people. You, Mr President, know quite as well as we do that this war is the result of the policy of all capitalist states; that the govern-

ments of all countries had vied with each other in armaments; that the ruling classes of all civilized nations followed a policy of conquests, and that therefore it would be extremely unfair if the common people, the bulk of the nations, who have paid for this policy with the blood of millions, who have suffered general political ruin through this policy, should in addition to all this have for that very policy which has brought about all this incalculable suffering, to pay tribute to the people actually responsible for the war. We therefore, Mr President, propose that the League of Nations should adopt as one of its basic principles the repudiation of war debts.

As to the reconstruction of the countries devastated by the war, we consider it entirely just that all peoples should in this respect help unfortunate Belgium, Poland and Serbia. And no matter how poor and ruined Russia may appear, she on her part is ready to help those victims of the war in whatever way she can, and she expects that American capital, which did not in any way suffer from this war, but which even benefited by it to the extent of many milliards of dollars of war profits, will for its part help these nations liberally.

But the League of Nations must not only settle the present war. It must also make any future war impossible. It cannot be unknown to you, Mr President, that the capitalists of your country contemplate continuing in the future the same policy of conquests and of exaction of super-profit from China and Siberia, and that, fearing competition on the part of Japanese capitalists, they are making military preparations in order to overcome the resistance which may be offered them by Japan. You undoubtedly know of similar plans of the ruling capitalist circles of other countries with regard to other territories and other nations. Knowing this you will have to agree with us that it is not possible to leave the factories, mines, banks, etc., in the hands of private individuals, who always use the marvellous means of production created by the common people to export products and capital to foreign countries, in

order to extract from them super-profits as payment for the goods forced on them, which provokes imperialist wars by the struggle over the booty.

We propose, therefore, Mr President, that the expropriation of the capitalists of all countries be adopted as another of the basic principles of the League of Nations. In your country, Mr President, the banks and the industries are in the hands of such an insignificant group of capitalists, that according to the assertion of your personal friend, Colonel Robins, in order to root out the main cause of wars it will be sufficient to arrest the leaders of these capitalist cliques and hand over to the masses of the nation what the capitalists have concentrated in their own hands by the usual methods of the capitalist world. If you agree to this, Mr President, if the sources of future wars are thus to be destroyed, without doubt it will be easy to pull down all economic barriers; and all peoples, having the means of production in their own hands, will be vitally interested in exchanging among themselves, giving what they do not need for what they need. Then the problem will boil down to the exchange of products among the nations, each of which will produce whatever it can best produce, with the League of Nations a league of mutual aid among the toiling masses. It will then be easy to reduce armed forces to the level necessary for the maintenance of internal security. We know full well that the greedy class of capitalists will endeavour to create internal danger, just as at present the Russian landowning class and the Russian capitalists, aided by American, English and French armed forces are endeavouring to take away the factories from the workers and the land from the peasants. But if the American workers, welcoming with enthusiasm your idea of the League of Nations, break the resistance of the American capitalists as we have broken the resistance of the Russian capitalists, then neither the German nor any other capitalists will be a source of particularly serious danger to the victorious working

class. Then it will suffice if every member of the community, after working his daily six hours, for a couple of hours a day for a few months, studies how to handle arms, and the whole nation will then know how to deal with internal danger.

And so Mr President, you see that though we know from experience what your promises mean, still we have based ourselves upon your proposals with regard to international peace and the League of Nations, endeavouring however to enlarge them lest they bring results which conflict with your promises—as happened in the case of your promise of help for Russia. We have tried to formulate your proposals for the League of Nations so concretely as to prevent the League of Nations from turning out to be a league of capitalists against the nations. If you do not agree with us on details, we have nothing against ‘open discussion of your peace terms,’ as provided in the first paragraph of your peace programme. If you will take your stand on the general basis of our proposals, we can easily come to agreement on details.

But there is also another possibility. We have dealt with two President Wilsons—the President Wilson of the attack on Archangel and the invasion of Siberia, and the President Wilson of the peace programme of the League of Nations. Is not the first of the two the real President, the one who actually directs the policy of the capitalist American Government? Is not the American Government the government of American industrial, commercial, rail, joint-stock companies; of American trusts, of American banks—in short the government of American capitalists? And are not the proposals made by such a Government with regard to the establishment of a League of Nations likely to result in the putting of new chains upon the masses of the nations—in the organization of an international trust for the exploitation of workers and for the suppression of weak nations? If that is the case, Mr President, you will find yourself unable to answer our questions and we shall say to the workers of all countries: ‘Take

care! Millions of your brothers, set one against the other by the capitalists of all countries, are still perishing in the war, and yet the capitalist bosses are already putting their heads together in order to suppress by their combined force the survivors when they demand a reckoning from the men responsible for the war.'

However, Mr President, we have no desire whatsoever to be at war with America, even though your Government has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars, and your office is not yet occupied by Eugene V. Debs, whom you now keep in prison; just as we have no desire whatever to be at war with Great Britain, even though the Cabinet of Mr Lloyd George has not yet been replaced by a Council of People's Commissars, headed by McLean; just as we have no desire whatever to be at war with France, even though the capitalist government of Clemenceau is not yet replaced by the workers' Government of Merheim; just as we concluded a peace with the Imperialist Government of Germany, even headed by Kaiser Wilhelm, upon which Government you, Mr President, look with no more favour than we, the Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government look upon you and yours—just as we do all this we propose that you, Mr President, consider jointly with your allies the following questions and give us exact and entirely business-like answers.

Do the governments of America, Great Britain and France intend to stop demanding the blood of the Russian people and the lives of Russian citizens, if the Russian people agree to pay them for it and to buy themselves off by ransom? And if so, exactly what tribute is it that the governments of America, Great Britain and France want from the Russian people? Do they want concessions, the turning over to them of the railroads, or mines, gold-mines for example on certain conditions, or is it territorial concessions, part of Siberia, or of the Caucasus or of the Murman coast?



We expect from you, Mr President, a definite declaration of what exactly are the demands that you and your allies present, and further, whether the union between your Government and those of the other Entente powers has the character of a joint stock company formed to secure dividends from Russia, or whether your Government and the Governments of the Entente powers will each present us, each for itself, separate demands, and what exactly those demands will be?

We should especially like to learn what are the demands of your French allies with regard to those milliards of roubles which the Paris bankers advanced as loans to the tyrant of Russia, to that enemy of 'his' people, to the criminal Government of the tsar. And in this connection you, Mr President, as well as your French allies, cannot help knowing that the Russian people, who are exhausted by war and who have not yet had time to enjoy the benefits of their popular Soviet Government, or to improve their economic affairs, will not be able to pay in full to the bankers of France the tribute for the thousands of millions spent by the tsar's Government against the interests of the people. And they would not be able to pay it, even if you and your allies did succeed in enslaving and drenching with blood the entire territory of Russia—a thing which our heroic revolutionary Red Army will anyway not permit.

Will your French allies present the demand for payment to them of a part of that tribute in instalments, and if so, for exactly how much; and do they realize that their claims will lead to the presentation of similar demands by other creditors of the infamous Government of the tsar, which has been overthrown by the Russian people?

We cannot for a moment believe that your Government and those of your allies have not a ready answer to these questions, just when your and their troops are attempting to advance on our territory with the obvious purpose of seizing and enslaving our country. The people of Russia through

their Red Army stand guard over their territory and are fighting magnificently against your invasion and the attack of your allies. But of course your Government and those of the other Entente powers have fully prepared the plans, for which you are shedding the blood of 'your own' soldiers. We expect you to make known to us your demands fully, clearly and precisely.

But if our expectations are disappointed, if you should give us no answer to our clear and precise questions, we shall draw the certain conclusion that our supposition is correct, that your Government and those of your allies do intend to obtain from the Russian people tribute in cash and in the natural wealth of Russia and in territorial aggrandisement for yourselves. We shall say so to the Russian people as well as to the toiling masses of other countries, and the absence of an answer on your part will for us all be a conclusive answer. The Russian people will understand that the demands of your Government and of those of your allies are so heavy and so considerable that you do not even wish to communicate them to the Russian Government.



## VII

# FELIX DZERZHINSKI

### *NOTE*

[This is the fit position in the book for the following charming portrait of a great man. The four preceding essays give us pictures of four great capitalist demagogues—Lloyd George, the Archbishop of Canterbury (past or present), President Wilson and President Ebert, and they make frequent proud references to the valiant way in which the peoples of the Soviet Union—the ‘common’ people—repelled the bloodthirsty attempts to crush them which went on behind the demagogy of those ‘democratic’ capitalist mouthpieces. In this way they provide a fitting introduction to a contrasting picture—to an intimate picture of the man who for years led in the great task of combating the enemies of the peoples within the U.S.S.R.

Following the preceding four portraits this brilliant brief biography of Felix Dzerzhinski comes like a welcome breath of fresh and pure air. A. B.]

## FELIX DZERZHINSKI

THE Social-Democratic Party of Poland grew out of the great strikes that swept the industrial areas of Poland during the 'nineties, and the experience obtained after the collapse of the semi-terroristic, semi-conspiratorial first Socialist Party of Poland, which was known as the 'Proletariat' Party. It was born in battle with the social-patriotic current of 1893, was early subjected to mass arrests and completely destroyed. The ease with which the tsarist police succeeded in crushing it is largely to be explained by the fact that the Party numbered among its members very few members of the intelligentsia, which in its turn is explained by the nationalism of most of the intelligentsia and the markedly non-nationalist orientation of the young Socialist Party, which at the very outset put forward the slogan of the joint struggle and identity of aims of the Polish and Russian proletariat. The arrests of Ratkinski, Veselovski and other Social-Democratic workers, and the lack of influx of new members from the intelligentsia broke up the network of contacts and disorganized the distribution of propaganda and the movement of active members. The various workers' groups were still too uncertain of their position to restore the organization. A group of founders of the Party, and its principal ideologists, *Juljan Marchlewski, Rosa Luxemburg, Leon Jügikhes-Tyszka and Abolja Warski*, who escaped through being abroad, were all theoreticians without direct connection with the country. But at last connection was re-established by *Felix Dzerzhinski*, twenty-three-year-old revolutionist, who escaped from exile after the debacle of 1895-1896. It was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that as a result of his efforts the Marxian internationalist *Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania* was formed and lived for ten years. One might say that this

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*party was the predecessor of the Communist Party of Poland as a mass party, and was the child of Felix Dzerzhinski's indefatigable efforts and endless labour. 'Joseph'—it was by this name that he was known among the masses of Polish workers—came to be the most beloved of all the Polish leaders.*

Tall, well built, with ardent eyes, quick, passionate speech, thus I first met him in the autumn of 1903, when he came to Cracow for a time to hide from tsarist detectives and at the same time to improve the apparatus for circulating Polish Social-Democratic literature, the publication of which had been resumed largely due to his initiative. He won the love and esteem not only of the older workers, but also of the youth then coming into the movement. In their eyes he was surrounded by a halo by reason of his terms in prison and exile and his reputation as Party organizer. His opinion was valued not only by Rosa but even by veteran Tyszkza who had great organizational experience and who combined sound Marxian scholarship with wonderful political sensitivity. On all practical questions of the movement Joseph's opinion was almost decisive. How did he obtain this authority? In fact, what was the personal origin of this energetic revolutionist, so strict towards himself and towards everybody else too, this man able to inspire and lead them all?

He was born in Lithuania, in the Ossmiansk district, in the family of a small Polish landowner. It was in that district that Joseph Pilsudski was born, several years earlier. Lithuania was at that time cowed by memories of 'hangman' Muraviov—of the punishments meted out by tsarism for the year 1863. The homes of the gentry were alive with thoughts of those whom the tsarist satrap had executed, or had exiled into penal servitude for participation in the uprising. The youth of the intelligentsia cherished thoughts of the struggle against tsarism for independence of the country. The leaders of the Polish Socialist Party, organized in the last decade of the nineteenth century, for the most part came from the younger

generation of these Polish landowner families. One of the few who rejected the road of nationalism and went over without hesitation to the camp of the international labour movement, was Dzerzhinski. His action is probably to be explained by the fact that being of a comparatively poor family he had seen the Lithuanian peasant masses at closer quarters and was also familiar with the life of the craftsmen of the small towns, and found he was nearer them than to the nobility and its ideals.

There was no factory proletariat in Lithuania. There were Polish and Jewish craftsmen, and it was among them that sixteen-year-old Dzerzhinski began his work. The necessity of working among Polish and Jewish apprentices in a country where the majority of the peasantry was Lithuanian may explain the international trend of Dzerzhinski's feeling and thought. He studied socialism through Polish and Russian works, and for the sake of his work among the Jewish workers he studied Yiddish. Later it was a great joke to us that at the head-quarters of Polish Social-Democracy, which contained quite a number of Jews, only Dzerzhinski, former gentleman of Poland, and Catholic, could read Yiddish. The frequent imprisonments of Dzerzhinski gave him time to study most of the available literature on socialism and he joined the Polish movement with a thoroughly worked-out conception of life. The literature of Polish Social-Democracy, including its organ *Sprawa Robotnicza* ('Labour Affairs'), published in Paris in 1894-1895, reached him only later when on the basis of his own experience and thinking, he had already, in the main, come to the same conclusions as our theorists had. The basis for his views had been given by Russian Marxist literature. You might say that he was *an expression of the identity of the Polish and Russian labour movements*.

His value to the movement was not only in the firmness of his views, but also in the unshakable revolutionary decisiveness he brought into the movement. The Polish

nobility of the borders, which had grown up in struggles with the Tartars, and later with the Lithuanian and Ukrainian peasantry, had been distinguished from time immemorial by great energy. It was the most resolute type of Polish society. Dzerzhinski had absorbed ideas foreign to this medium, but defended them with the same energy with which the Polish border landed class had defended their class interests. Dzerzhinski did not recognize difficulties or defeats any more than the Skszetuskis, the Wolodyjewskis and other heroes of the Polish frontier landowners famed in Polish historical novels had done. Dangers existed only to be overcome, defeats only to discover one's errors and learn by them, and reforge one's sword for further battles. Most of the landed class who came over to the side of the revolutionary classes were of the 'penitent nobleman' type. But Dzerzhinski's mastery of revolutionary thought enabled him *fully to identify himself with the working class*, and to feel himself an inseparable part of it. He was not a man who idealized the working class from a distance. In the course of his long illegal activities he had lived with workers, eaten with them from a common platter, shared their beds, known them intimately with all the failings resulting from their history, but also with all that is great in them, pregnant with socialism. In all moments of danger he was confident he could find workers who would not give him away, that with them and by their assistance he would be able once again to build up the shattered organization, that they would muster a militant detachment prepared afresh to go into struggle, fearing neither hunger nor cold, nor afraid to leave wife and children, nor afraid of long years of solitude in the Akatui prison or the far-away swamps of Siberia. In the course of this life among the working class the raw iron of his proletarian idea was tempered to supple steel, and this is the quality that Felix Dzerzhinski brought into the Polish Social-Democratic movement.

In the illegal work preceding 1905 this young revolutionist



became a leader. When the October Manifesto released him from his imprisonment in the tenth division of the Warsaw fortress where he had been incarcerated in July, 1905, following a mass Party conference called by him in the Dąbia Woods near Warsaw, nobody had the slightest doubt that he, Dzerzhinski, was the leader of Social-Democracy. During the few months of mass movement up to his arrest in July he was a flame inspiring the whole party. Who can forget the days when Marcin Kasprzak was being tried by court martial? Kasprzak was a worker, one of the founders of the Party, on trial for armed resistance to arrest, in the spring of 1904, in a secret printing-works. The city was filled with troops, there were mass arrests. On a new press Dzerzhinski and Ganecki ran off proclamations calling for a general strike. Dzerzhinski personally went through the lines of gendarmes meant to isolate the working-class districts, and carried copies of the proclamations round his waist. Tall, strapping, head high, he passed through the ranks of soldiers and gendarmes who were searching every passer-by. He looked bravely into the eyes of a gendarme, who could not make up his mind to stop him. He remained in the memory of the Warsaw workers for long years, as a legend of a resolute revolutionist. When he was caught in Dąbia Woods he made the comrades give him all the papers which it was impossible to destroy in order to take all the responsibility upon himself. In Dąbia all those arrested were kept under the convoy of the Cossacks, but Dzerzhinski immediately started propaganda among them. Had there not been a change of guard he would have succeeded in organizing an escape.

As organizer immediately after October, 1905, he swept the country like a flame, everywhere strengthening the connections with the centre, everywhere inspiring a militant spirit, everywhere creating the deepest confidence that the Party would lead the working masses of Poland together with the workers of the whole of Russia to storm the strongholds of

tsarism. At the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, the Social-Democrats of Poland and Lithuania did not join the ranks of the general Russian organization because of a split over the national question. Then after the split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, for more than a year the Party hesitated as to which faction it should join. The leading ideologists of the Party, closely connected with the Western-European movement, inclined to the organizational ideas of the Mensheviks, which seemed to them to move in accord with the experience of the international labour movement than the organizational ideas of Lenin. By the end of 1903 Dzerzhinski was very close to Bolshevism. By the end of 1904, after the Zemstvo campaign, *Dzerzhinski was eagerly aiming at the earliest possible union with the Bolsheviks*. In 1906, throughout the negotiations with the Russian Social-Democrats he played a decisive part in the delegations appointed by our main head-quarters. Even at that time Lenin had appraised him as his closest adherent among the Polish Social-Democrats.

The years of reaction came. Once again Dzerzhinski escaped from exile and worked feverishly in Warsaw rebuilding the organization. New questions arose of struggle against *liquidators and against Otzovism* (the 'Left' group in the Bolshevik Party who wanted to denounce all open parliamentary work and concentrate purely on 'underground' or secret work). Dzerzhinski could not be moved from his Leninist position which demanded struggle on both fronts, both legally in the Duma, and illegally in secret organization 'underground.' While at work on rebuilding the underground organization he also worked zealously for the establishment of a legal Social-Democratic Press. In 1912 a *split* took place in the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania which started from disagreement on a series of organizational matters between some of the district organizations and the theoretical centre abroad. This split, which was full of hard

political and personal struggle, and caused great suffering to all the participants, was real hell to Dzerzhinski, because while he was occupied with supporting the main nucleus of leaders of Polish Social-Democracy he was obliged for a time to desist from pushing for unity with the Bolshevik centre, from which nothing separated him politically.

What Dzerzhinski went through when, not long before the 1914-1917 war, he found himself again behind the stone walls of the fortress of Warsaw and then later in Orel serving penal servitude, he used to find it difficult to tell. The crash of the Second International, the break-up of the Party after its great successes in the 'Pravda' period, the murk that fell over the whole labour movement, the echoes of war that reached him through the prison bars, failed to break him even for a moment. February, 1917, found him again in the militant ranks of the Bolshevik organization, working untiringly, full of faith, thirsting for the main struggle. October found him a *member of the Revolutionary War Committee in Petrograd*, organizing workers for the working-class dictatorship.

After the great factory towns of Poland, from Łódz, Warsaw and the coal basin of Dobrowa, after exile and penal servitude, he came to the Putilov and Obukhov workers, and as their leader he entered the government of the Union of Soviet Republics.

During the days of struggle for Petrograd and Moscow, Dzerzhinski organized a 'Commission for combating Counter-Revolution, Speculation and Sabotage.' A sword of revolutionary rigour forged and tempered in fifteen years of battle was now raised by Dzerzhinski in defence of the proletarian revolution. This sword was wielded with crushing force against the class enemy whenever they raised their heads. Untiringly he kept watch, day and night, a faithful guardian of the revolution, day and night looking for the enemy, dogging him, taking him by surprise. Dzerzhinski

formed an organization of revolutionary vigilance with the same verve as he once formed the workers' organizations.

Our enemies have developed legends about the all-seeing eyes of the Cheka, about its all-hearing ears, about the omnipresent Dzerzhinski. They have pictured the Cheka as a sort of vast army, spread over the whole country, holding it in a firm grasp, and even reaching out its tentacles right into their own camp. They have not understood *wherein* Dzerzhinski's strength consisted.

In the first place, Dzerzhinski's strength was of the same nature as the strength of the Bolshevik Party itself—it consisted in having the full confidence of the working masses and poorest peasants, in their confidence that Dzerzhinski was *their own* flaming sword, *their own* watchful eye. Every worker, every poor peasant, considered it his duty to help the Cheka in its great struggle to defend the revolution. The Cheka did not consist only of the brave Chekists. *The Cheka was a multimillioned working-class body watching, reporting, every movement of the enemy.* Who does not remember that during the struggle against Yudenitch, there was unearthed a conspiracy between the Chief of Staff of the Petrograd Defence and Yudenitch. This Chief of Staff was actually negotiating with Yudenitch and acting under his orders! The go-between used by this betrayer was an old man, a naturalized Frenchman. This old man's daughter lost a packet of papers in the street. A Red Army private picked the packet up, opened it and noticed some sketches. He saw that they were military sketches, suspected that there was something wrong and arrested the woman who had dropped the papers. That brought the main nucleus of Yudenitch's espionage into the hands of the Cheka. Dzerzhinski told me that at the investigation the Frenchman said: 'If not for an accident you would not have caught me!' I asked Dzerzhinski how he had answered him. Dzerzhinski said he told him that *if it had not been for the vigilance of an ordinary Red Army*

*ranker the accident of losing the papers would not have done him any harm, that this vigilance of the Red Army man was not accident at all, that this watchfulness of ordinary Red Army men was the very strength of the Cheka.* The leading Chekists were selected by Dzerzhinski from among old worker members of the Party, men or women who were indubitably devoted to the tasks of the proletarian revolution.

The second source of Dzerzhinski's strength, as well as of the Cheka, was the *determinedness of their actions, which was born of their iron conviction in the moral rightness of the proletarian revolution.* In the summer of 1918 Dzerzhinski gave an interview to the representatives of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois newspapers which were still in existence. They asked if he was not prepared to admit that the Cheka might sometimes make mistakes and commit acts of injustice in individual cases. Dzerzhinski answered; 'The Cheka is not a court. The Cheka *is the defence of the revolution*, as the Red Army is. And just as in the civil war the Red Army cannot stop to ask whether or not it may harm individuals, but is obliged to act with the one thought of securing the victory of the revolution over the bourgeoisie, the Cheka is obliged to defend the revolution and conquer the enemy, even if its sword by chance does sometimes fall upon the heads of the innocent.' For Dzerzhinski the safety of the revolution was the supreme law, and so he could find in his heart that unshakable rigour without which a victorious struggle against counter-revolution would have been quite impossible.

Enemies have tried to make him out to be blood-thirsty. His name has become a bogey to the bourgeoisie of the world. But those who know Dzerzhinski know that his mercilessness did not come easy to him. Dzerzhinski was a man straining from the roots of himself towards socialism, to a harmonious social order which was to make possible the full development of all human forces. Dzerzhinski, this man of merciless warfare, was wrapt in dreams—dreams of a social order which

would not only cease to produce inequality, but also cease to produce crime. He was full of the profoundest *love of people*, love of their thoughts. While behind prison bars, in 1908, in his diary, he recorded his extremely deep-seated aversion to force. Even gendarmes and agents-provocateurs he understood as the product of social conditions. It was only the deep conviction he had, that *any soft-heartedness would only bring distress and suffering to the millions of the masses*, allowed him to use his revolutionary sword without wavering.

He did not like to speak of what went on within him during sleepless nights, but from time to time words escaped which showed he did not find things easy. When in 1920 during the struggle against White Poland we were preparing to leave for the front, hoping for victory, hoping to help the Polish workers to quickly establish their power, to free themselves from the bourgeoisie, Dzerzhinski said: 'When we win I shall take on the job of Commissar for Education!' Comrades present at this conversation laughed. Dzerzhinski seemed to shrink up. But his words laid bare what was clear to everybody who knew him. *Destruction, force, were for him only a means to an end. His whole nature yearned for construction of the new life.*

Because of the strength of this desire, at the end of the civil war he joined the ranks of the builders of socialism. Not only the international bourgeoisie but even many of our own comrades were surprised when they heard of Dzerzhinski's appointment to the post of Director of Transport. But this appointment corresponded not only to Dzerzhinski's dreams, it corresponded to his whole nature. Without letting out of his hands the leadership of the G.P.U., because danger still threatened the republic internally and external counter-revolutionary activity still persisted, Dzerzhinski threw himself eagerly into the economic task.

For his work in the new administrative post Dzerzhinski had neither professional nor social-economic preparation.

His education had been like that of many of our older outstanding Party members. Prison had been the university in which he, like the others, read Marxian literature. He had no special leaning towards studying economics. How then was it that he, a man of really innate modesty, a man to whose nature boasting was quite alien, came to take up this extremely difficult technical task of economic reconstruction? When the Central Committee placed him at the head of the People's Commissariat for Transport, many thought that it was done because he was an *udarnik*, a 'shock-brigader,' that with his unflagging energy he would overcome the immediate difficulties that stood in the way of the army of railway workers. But soon it became evident that Dzerzhinski understood his task in a very different way, that he was studying not only the organization of the railways but all the economic problems tied up with the development of transport, that he was concerned with the question of coal and iron, without a solution of which it was impossible to lift transport to its proper height. For Dzerzhinski his work on transport was merely an organic part of the whole work on the economic front. He was, in fact, profoundly interested in and profoundly stirred by the *problems of the construction of socialism*.

He went into these problems fully, regarding them as vital tasks for every communist. It was not a speciality to him, it was the task of tasks. Dzerzhinski was profoundly convinced of our ability not merely to strengthen the country's economy but to build socialism in spite of the slowness of the international revolution. He had to study day and night in order to get a clear picture for himself of the country's economic organism as it was before the war, merely in order to be clear about the changes which had taken place during the war and revolution—all that in order to be able to choose the most important link to deal with at the moment. And he studied and worked with zeal and tension such as only a man of his faith and energy could have had, for *it was a task which*

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*provided an outlet for all Dzerzhinski's fundamental yearnings as a revolutionist.*

Not long ago at a small comradely meeting of a group of administrators I had an opportunity to speak with Dzerzhinski about our current economic problems. Others discussed, others proved this, that, or the other—but only Dzerzhinski burned, burned with enthusiasm, with faith and iron conviction. One of the comrades there who had known Dzerzhinski as I had for over twenty years, said to me on the way home, *'In all his life he has not wasted one grain of his socialist convictions or his socialist faith.'*

Working furiously, kindling with his faith all around him, Dzerzhinski understood very well that his work would be successful, that the work of the Party would be crowned with victory, if in addition to all else, it was never forgotten that *for victory we need a full utilization of the bourgeois science that we are heirs to.* And Dzerzhinski, who knew how to suppress without quarter any attempt at sabotage on the part of the middle-class specialists, also found it possible to fight for better working conditions for those same middle-class specialists, to protect them against mere prejudice and even against the natural distrust of the working masses. The best among these men learned to esteem and to love Dzerzhinski and followed his great work with interest. At the same time Dzerzhinski understood that *the most perfect science would not help us to build communism if it did not draw in the working masses, if the working masses were not aflame striving to build socialism, if they were not drawn into working out all problems of our construction.*

In the last official document he signed—a circular of the Supreme Economic Council and the All-Union Council of Trade Unions about the necessity of strengthening the work of industrial conferences—Dzerzhinski wrote: *'Administrators must understand that not one measure, not one item of policy, however vital, can be put into practice, and give*



*the necessary results, if it is done over the heads of the working masses, 'if it is not understood by them.'* These words of Dzerzhinski constitute his testament, the testament of a builder of socialism, who having bound up his life with that of the working masses, having lived in their ranks and headed them, having driven away the enemy, took up pick and shovel, so to speak, in one hand, while he kept a ready sword in the other.

Dzerzhinski is no more. For the millions of the masses his name is that of a fearless fighter, a symbol of their firm will to victory. They see in him the champion of workers and poor peasants. His name will go down in the history of socialism as the name of one of the best fighters of the proletariat. *If we say that the masses will always think of Lenin as the brain of the revolution, we can say that Dzerzhinski will be remembered as its heart.* There was a combination of qualities in him such as history is not likely soon to repeat. This communist deeply devoted to the working masses, who saw in them and their struggles the assurance of final victory, this communist who succeeded in conquering bourgeois individualism in himself, was also *a great personality*; and the whole Party down to its very latest recruit knows that just such a fighter as Dzerzhinski, with that wonderful alloy of will and faith, we shall never have again. At Dzerzhinski's grave, bowing their heads with those of the workers of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics for whom he toiled the last ten years, there will stand not only the workers of Poland in whose ranks he fought all the days of his youth, and for whom his very name is a clarion call, but also the enslaved and imprisoned workers of all countries, as for them a name like Dzerzhinski's shines with a bright ray of hope.

But the world bourgeoisie will rejoice at Dzerzhinski's death. The founder and the head of the Cheka is dead. This news will flash round the world and inspire our enemies with hope. But they will be very mistaken. Just as Lenin's death

stirred the working masses to close their ranks more firmly than ever, Dzerzhinski's death will remind vast numbers of them of the great October days, of the heroic years of struggle against foreign capitalist intervention, and strengthen their determination to summon all their energy for the accomplishment of the task to which Dzerzhinski devoted the flame of his last years—*the task of socialist construction*.



## VIII

# A CHILDREN'S WORLD

### NOTE

[Since Dzerzhinski, as one-time leader of the peoples of the Soviet Union in their revolutionary role of vigilance against the enemies of progress, was a keystone of the foundation of socialism, it seems most fitting to follow his biography with Radek's lovely essay on another keystone—the Marxist attitude towards child education, which makes the U.S.S.R. a 'children's world.' The two keystones complement each other.

The essay needs no 'explanation.' But it may be useful to foresee the kind of criticism lesser middle-class minds will put up. Yes, they will say, Radek is a clever journalist, what a remarkable smoke-cloud he spins round the utilization of child labour in the U.S.S.R. As if such utilization existed. But those who will not see, must of course remain blind. Yet those enquiring readers who reflect are certain to see how ridiculous it is to twist Radek's words into that meaning. Other critics will say 'this is nothing new, we have handicrafts in schools here now.'

All such critics will be missing Radek's emphasis, which is not on work, but on *social work*, collective work. Herein is the bottomless gulf which separates the old individualistic education of capitalism, from the collective Marxist education. Only experience can provide understanding. The fruitful, healthy, stimulating effect of the lightest tasks, if only they are socially useful and socially performed, will be obvious to parents of the working classes and some parents of the lesser middle class, who know by

## PORTRAITS AND PAMPHLETS

experience how their children, educated to perform useful tasks in the narrow society of the home, differ from those children for whom everything is done. Translate that difference into infinitely bigger social terms and you understand what Marxist education will be about. What, of course, it is not, is that pitiable wallowing in sexual perversion which is what individualistic capitalist society, in its decadence, conceives of as 'modern' child education. A. B.]

## A CHILDREN'S WORLD

June, 1932

OUR 'Day of the Schools' is intended to direct public opinion to our schools, as a mighty lever of socialist construction. It serves not only to bring home to the widest circles of workers and collective farmers an understanding of the importance both of general and polytechnical education, but to help them to understand the peculiar characteristics of our Soviet schools and our Soviet method of education. Without understanding the socialist character of education, that is without a grasp of what new things the revolution has brought to education, the Soviet public cannot afford our schools the great assistance they can and should afford them. We have a much richer pedagogical literature than communists who are not teachers realize. It is still going through a great process of ferment as the details of its methodology are being worked out, but whoever acquaints himself with it sees that our Marxist pedagogues have prepared a solid theoretical basis for the tremendous advances in education which we have already begun to realize. Now, after the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan, we have been able to allocate millions of tons of iron and the corresponding quantities of bricks and timber to school building, and so to provide educational production with a firmer foundation than it has at present. That foundation will not be complete without a superstructure of social consciousness. But unfortunately wide strata of workers and collective farmers cannot yet understand serious treatises on pedagogy, and our popular pedagogical literature is still very poor. We have not even got a good mass pedagogic magazine. Even we, communist parents, to our regret, do not fully understand the colossal significance of all that is taking place in our children's world to-day.

It is usually necessary to experience personal difficulties with the education of one's own child before one begins to pay more attention to what is going on in our Soviet schools and children's world. The present writer is no better than other communist parents, but since, for the above-mentioned reason, I found myself driven to look a little into the relations between the school, home and factory and the child's own world, to discuss the question with experienced comrades and to read pedagogical literature, perhaps I may be allowed to share with Soviet society what I learned of the processes going on in this great battlefield of communism against the remnants of capitalism.

It used to be all so very simple, or at least seemed so. Parents commanded, children obeyed. The more obedient the child the better it was considered to be. A child was brought up in the conviction that it was nothing, the adult everything. Children were taught to obey their teachers, who were presented to them as supreme authorities. Even in those cases where the child belonged to an oppressed nationality or the oppressed class, and its parents mistrusted the teacher, they taught the child to look on the teacher as a powerful force which should be obeyed by the child even if it was hostile. Adults imagined that the authority of teachers and adults was the basis of education.

One lever of education was private interest—'the future of the child.' It is true that a great deal was said about 'motherland' and all manner of general principles, but in practice the child felt it was studying to be able to earn its livelihood or, if it was the child of propertied parents, to prepare for an eminent position.

If from the educational methods used by the great animal-trainer Durov to train animals we exclude Durov's personal great human goodness (he rejected the use of crude force), and remember how for every successful execution of his order

Durov immediately rewarded the performing walrus with a fish—we have a symbol of the old system of education.

Here is the first thing we must understand—authority, the authority of parents and teachers, has failed. This does not mean that a child does not love his mother or father if they are attentive to him, or that he cannot become attached to a good teacher. It would of course be ridiculous to say that. But a child obeys father, mother or teacher only if they are good and attentive. I have discussed this question with a very large number of children. They all defended the general thesis that children are not obliged to obey their parents.

‘Nina’s father tells her to mock other children as “dirty Jews.” Should Nina obey her father in that?’ the children asked. I said: ‘But not all parents are backward; some parents are communists. Shouldn’t you obey them?’ They said: ‘But though Marusia’s father is a communist, he beats her mother, and he drinks.’ The girls said that Marusia had to complain about him not only to the police but also to the District Control Commission (these children know all the ins and outs, all the authorities which can protect their interests!). I said: ‘But there are not many such communists who beat their wives, they are an exception.’ They answered, ‘Yes, but many communist fathers leave for work in the morning and come home only late at night; many mothers are also very busy and have very little time for their children.’

Parents often do not know what a child is thinking about or what is troubling it. They often answer impatiently. No wonder that children fail to consider them supreme authorities. When communist parents by being more attentive try to be real communists in relation to their children, they win the children’s confidence, but this confidence does not leave the children entirely unconcerned. They do not look on their parents as the final instance. Children know that nowadays divorces frequently happen, and in their eyes the family has ceased to be a firm basis for the future.



And the teachers? The smallest children know that the supreme authority in the country is—the Communist Party. Their measure of the social value of a man or woman is whether he or she is a Party member or not, and if so, how they fulfil their Party duties. They know that the ruling class is the working class, and they know this not in the abstract, but because they see it daily expressed in scores of events that affect themselves.

A large majority of the teachers are non-party people. The children know that the older ones were already teachers under the tsar. Many of the teachers, even to-day, in spite of the best intentions, are unable to hide from the children that they are not unreserved supporters of the building of socialism. I have heard children say: 'They keep on jawing about the revolution, but why aren't they in the party, then?' I said that we cannot do without the old kind of teachers, but must educate them. I pointed out that the Party, being the organization of advanced workers, does not accept all applicants for membership, and that not every teacher who would like to become a Party member is able to join it. The answer came pat: 'Well, if that is so it means the Party does not consider him progressive, so why should I take what he says as law?' There was no answer to that, except that we can no more require of children unconditional obedience to their teachers than we can demand unconditional confidence in the pre-revolutionary engineers from our workers. That a worker is an adult and the child a child makes no difference. A child also sees open eyed and the little head thinks over what has been seen.

The demands made by some teachers that the child's home must give them full support, and back up their decisions, cannot be accorded. There are excellent non-party teachers who deserve full support, but there are teachers whose opinions and acts we communists cannot condone. Even if we tried to do so, the result would be the same, the children would not obey unconditionally.

Where then is the authority, without which education is impossible; in what does the main lever of our education consist?

I have had occasion during the last three or four months to visit many of our schools; I have sought opinions out of the children's own mouths; I have looked into the state of affairs in various groups; and I have come to the conclusion that only where there are good Pioneer Detachments—strong children's organizations—is there the main lever, that is to say any foundation, for our influence on our children.

We have always understood the significance of the Pioneer Detachments for the political education of our children, but that even we communists do not yet appreciate the really great importance of the Pioneer Detachments or of pioneer work is shown by the very feeble assistance given the pioneer movement by the Young Communist League or Communist Party, or by us as individual communists. I hasten to add that I am not thinking of our propaganda in Pioneer Detachments, though proper and thorough explaining to our children what is going on under their own eyes is of first-class importance. Our life is still full of contradictions, and children often have difficulty in understanding them. There are even parents among our communists who complain of overtaxing the children's brains with politics. But just try to keep from children such events as the trial of the wreckers! I know that among our children the commutation of the sentences passed on the wreckers caused a storm of indignation. 'What is this? Betrayed the country! Wanted to condemn our workers and peasants to starvation and were not shot!' A child, you see, is not a dialectician. Only life teaches dialectics. Children like to have simple yardsticks to measure by. They want the law laid down exactly as to what is right and what is wrong. In passing judgment on the decision of the All Union Central Executive Committee, they were convinced of one thing and one thing only—that deliberate wrecking is the greatest of anti-social crimes, and that society

must defend itself against it. It is difficult, too, for a child to understand the explanation of the hesitating attitude of the lesser middle-class strata which have provided the majority of our experts, or why we needed to make use of the technical knowledge left by the past or any other of the score or more of practical considerations which guided the Central Executive Committee to pardon a large number of the wreckers. Help to the Pioneer Detachments, and thoroughly correct propaganda, are of inestimable importance in regard to questions like these.

Children come up, too, against even more fundamental questions which they are unable to answer. They need the help of comrades capable of explaining to them all the complexity of the problems of revolution. All children notice the continued existence of inequality under the Soviet power. The more fiercely a child accepts the basic concepts of communism, the more sensitive it is to this inequality. To explain that material inequality cannot be ended until classes disappear; that though we have conquered the bourgeoisie we have not yet finally destroyed classes; and further to explain the inequality which proceeds from the divisions of labour into mental and physical and a host of other problems requiring well-instructed Pioneer Detachments in closer touch with the Y.C.L. and the Party than the corps of our teachers is.

But however important that side of education may be, not less important, indeed perhaps more important, is the fact that the Pioneer organization is the children's own collective, in which they carry on their own debates and discussions, learn to obey the collective will, to work out systems of collective discipline, and to act collectively. The disciplinary significance of the Pioneer Detachments is one of the decisive factors in our new education. The child's social world judges all who break its laws. If that social world is well organized, if it contains a solid nucleus of convinced Pioneers,

the socially imposed penalty has tremendous influence on the child. Teachers who think that a child is afraid of caning or of school punishments, but not afraid of his comrades' judgment, are blind. Our children no longer fear physical punishment, because they know that the Soviet State does not permit physical punishment, that it is a punishable crime. Punishment from the teachers' side has no moral authority for children, because they consider, and rightly, that it is easy for grown-ups to pass sentence on them, little ones, and they see no justice in it. But if the sentence is passed by their own comrades, and if those comrades have authority, the force of the judgment is enormous. If you find a child indifferent to his comrades' sentence you don't need even to know the particular Pioneer Detachment to be sure that it is without an authoritative nucleus, that the children composing it are as little disciplined as the child they condemn, and that they sentence their comrade simply to enjoy the fact that he was caught and they were not. Not attaching any moral weight to the judgment, the child accepts it easily. Where, however, there is a firmly welded Pioneer nucleus, its sentence is severe, and the child is taught to obey. He is taught to understand that he is not an individual, not a free agent doing just what he wants, at liberty to go against society, but that he is a member of society with a duty to obey it. A school in which the Pioneer movement is kept in the background is a school in which discipline is rotten, progress limited, the children wild and uncontrolled, and beatings more and more frequent. A school without a Pioneer Detachment or with one not permeated by the Pioneer spirit is a school without a backbone. Those who do not understand this, who expect to get over disorder in school or cover up backwardness by transferring the 'guilty' children elsewhere, or by punishing 'hooligan tricks,' which in most cases result from non-utilization of the child's energy, will have but little success. Those who try to find the centre of gravity of school advancement in a 'bright child' instead of in

the collective not only fail to achieve their aim, but do positive harm, by diverting both the advanced pupil and the others from the only path there is to a good communist school.

It is not only the teachers, but often we communists ourselves, who underestimate this significance of Pioneer work, the self-government of children by the aid of their own organization. I have seen not only a monstrous lack of understanding of this question on the part of school leaders who recognized the significance of the Pioneer Detachments in words, yet in actual deeds struggled against the ills of their schools by means of moral ostracism directed against individual children, but I have even heard reports of school inspections by whole detachments of communists who inspected every conceivable thing but the pupil's own organization and the work of the Pioneer Detachments!

We need radical change here, a great deal of work from the Party first of all on us communists, and then on the rest of the population, for this is the very backbone of our educational system.

And now the question: 'What is a good Pioneer Detachment?' A girl pioneer, an intelligent child, very forward, runs about without a Pioneer tie. I asked her:

'Why are you without a Pioneer tie? You're a Pioneer, aren't you?'

'Fine Pioneers we are!'

'What do you mean, "fine Pioneers"?''

'What do we do!' was the girl's reply.

I was very surprised. I said: 'You do the same things other Pioneers do.'

'Last year,' she said, 'we collected sacks for grain gathering; this year all we have done is write a letter to some German Pioneers, and now we are waiting for the answer to it, and all else we do is cut articles out of *Pioneer Truth*.'

I was done. This child had given me a most important criterion of Pioneer Detachment work. A child does not only

want interpretation of events, not only collective play and public parades, and so forth, it wants to do socially useful things. And here we come to the heart of the question of the communist education of children. Here we have reached the greatest revolution wrought by communist thought. This is more than mere pedagogics. This is the root question of the growth of socialist society from below, its foundations.

Our whole social atmosphere is permeated by the ideology of labour. The Five-Year Plan! What exactly is it? A great comprehensive programme of labour, to the accomplishment of which the Party and the Government summon the people—through the Press, the wireless, the cinema, the theatre, and street propaganda. To carry out the Plan, Party and Government have set in motion thousands of levers. All that is most able and courageous in our Soviet people has the profoundest faith in labour, a faith which has become the distinction between the advanced and the backward.

Daily, hourly, our children hear that in spite of great difficulties we are creating a new society, that he who by devotion to his work helps to carry out the Five-Year Plan is regarded as a man, and he who does not help in the great work is an enemy and parasite. Is it surprising if our children start applying this criterion to themselves, if they too respond to the country's great call?

Our whole future depends upon how powerfully the aims of the Five-Year Plan win the hearts of scores of millions of our children, for this is no matter of a single effort, which will be over when the second Five-Year Plan is completed. Communism is a matter of creating a society to which work is delight. Can we say to our children, 'You are tiny, there is nothing you can do. You just study, stick to your lesson books, so that you will be able to do good work in the future'?

No, we cannot. That would be brushing aside the little hands reached out, and chilling the eager little hearts which long to take part with us in the building of a new world.

That would be a terrible mistake. Even though they are small, children can help in the Five-Year Plan. There are thousands of socially useful things a children's collective can do. Organizing this work would strengthen a thousand times the only motive power of education—emulation—emulation in study, emulation in discipline.

The Party in its programme has engraved in our thought the great teachings of Owen and Marx on the significance of labour and education, on the absolute necessity for the polytechnical education of children for preparing them from childhood for social labour. And that very contemptuous question that child put to me—'What do we do?'—is proof that the Party has placed its hand on the real lever of child education under communism.

The First Polytechnical Congress, and the debates among communist pedagogues about polytechnization, show us all the difficulties there are about putting into practice the great demands of our Party, the great programme bequeathed to us by Lenin, who, though not a specialist in pedagogy, as the greatest modern communist, with implicit faith in the victory of communism, strove for mastery of all the motive powers of communism, and so came to deep understanding of the problems of our education.

Polytechnization meets with difficulties which will be overcome as our industry and State and collective farms progress, and as far as we base education on actual labour. But it would be a crime to assume that until we can establish actual school-factories and school State farms we must be content with things as they are. The experience of what I have recently seen convinces me that in improving the foundation of our industry and our methods of polytechnization, we must even now begin to pay serious attention to these factors. Our children must not simply study labour with a view to what they are going to do when grown up. Even now they must begin doing really useful work as there is no stronger stimulus

to polytechnical study than doing socially useful labour, on however small a scale this may be. Let our schools and Pioneer Detachments busy themselves with this organization of socially useful labour. Let our children see that they really are taking part in building our new world. Let them feel that they are not simply supported by society. Let them feel that they too are creating and thereby helping the society in which they live.

There is something new in the world of our children which is so real that it can almost be grasped in the hand—and that is the growth of social consciousness, of comprehension that man does not live for himself but for the society which has made him. In this lies the whole distinction between the world of our children and the capitalist children's world. Our children's education moves by social labour. Child society is like early human society. Social labour is the living authority by which to overcome the anti-social tendencies of children.

I do not say that the children's world of the U.S.S.R. has already become a new socialist society. There are remains of capitalism still alive in our economic life, and in the consciousness of our adults, and they cannot but continue to exist in the life and psychology of children. But the new is no longer a mere seedling. Just as in Soviet economic life the social forms have begun to prevail, as we establish the foundations of socialism we shall see a socialist children's society growing and pushing up from below.

Only if we grasp this can we take up school work, the creation of socialist education, with the infinite enthusiasm and infinite faith it demands. That socialist education, when realised, will give us a new, social generation, capable of completing the great task begun one October.





## IX

# THE CIVILIZATION OF SOCIALISM IN THE BUILDING

### *NOTE*

[Perhaps when Radek speaks of the cramping of individuality under capitalism, as compared with socialism, some readers will want to say, 'Oh no, nonsense.' They will be readers who accept the popular bourgeois version of the 'stultifying influence of communism.' And when they go on to read of individuality under capitalism as being for the few at the cost of 'the degradation of the masses to the level of cattle' they will say 'class war twaddle.'

But just think a moment. Isn't it so, exactly so? Only, before you answer, first answer this question—have you ever shared the life of the proletariat in all its misery; have you really first hand knowledge by which you answer so lightly? If you have not, how can you question so easily that your individuality is bought at the cost of destroying the individuality of millions at home and tens of millions abroad? A. B.]

## THE CIVILIZATION OF SOCIALISM IN THE BUILDING

A FEW thousands of members of the lesser Polish nobility when exiled from Poland after the suppression of the uprising of 1831, created a romantic Polish literature in a foreign land. Apart from our estimation of the social content of the writings of Mickiewicz and Słowacki (and that content is far from being uniform), one thing is indisputable: that bright Pleiad of romantics raised Polish literature to unprecedented heights, and gave us one of the most beautiful pages of world literature.

Hundreds of thousands of Russian capitalists, landowners, civil servants and other functionaries, officers and writers, swept by the wave of revolution from their native land, and spread widely over the world, have been unable in the course of fifteen years to produce a single story, drama or collection of verse which might deeply move us, which might convey to the world, even that world which is so very well disposed towards them, something of what they have undergone, suffered and thought. The historian of a hundred years hence who writes about them will probably recall only the touching song of Vertinski—a cabaret poet—about a mad organ-grinder. That is all that the present Russian émigrés have been able to salvage of the civilization of Pushkin, Gogol, and Tolstoy.

The difference between the cultural creativeness of the Polish émigrés and the cultural sterility of the émigrés from Russia may well serve as starting-point for some reflections on the developmental process which civilization is undergoing in the land of the Soviets, upon the birth of a new civilization on the territory of the former tsarist empire.

The Polish emigration produced a great literature because the nobility of Poland could not be silenced by the blows inflicted upon it by tsarism. Even after the suppression of the

revolt of 1830-1831, the country manor and the parish priest still dominated. After 1831 the cultured classes of Polish towns lent an attentive ear to what the emigration had to say. The Polish emigration knew that nobody had taken its place. It did not feel doomed to wither away like dry branches which 'the wind has borne far beyond the forest clearing.' Sufferings and setbacks merely turned it into a full-toned, sonorous harp.

But the Russian emigration is sterile because nothing but hatred connects it with the life of its former fatherland, because in the life of the victorious masses of the Soviet Union it has no place. Though plucked root and all from the land of the Soviets, it cannot take root again in a foreign soil. That part which has become assimilated to foreign life—the class of speculators—knows only the civilization of the cocktail-bar. The majority of the émigrés, living in need, in a struggle for their daily bread, hate their new surroundings, hate work, hate their want, and are able to do nought but sigh about their lost paradise. But in the depth of their hearts they know how repulsive and infinitely vacant that paradise was, and so even their distress is paltry, no use to anybody.

In order to understand what is taking place in the cultural life of the Land of the Soviets, it is necessary to understand the change from the social life of former Russia, to grasp the essentially new relationships which lie at the basis of a civilization which is new both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The first thing to strike the eye is the huge mass of people studying, reading, discussing.

I shall not cite statistics here. I shall dwell only on a few facts. Before the World War the circulation of the whole Russian Press was four million copies. Now it has reached thirty million.\* The limits of its growth are determined not by the quantity of readers available (their number is growing at an unheard-of rate), but by the quantity of paper our paper industry is able to produce. Before the war Russia imported

\* This figure has now been far outstripped.

paper from Esthonia, Finland and places abroad. Now the output of paper has increased ten times but still cannot satisfy the growing demand. *Izvestia* and *Pravda* each have a daily circulation of over a million and a half. Yet as far back as January, 1932, these newspapers were unable to satisfy half the number of those who had tendered subscriptions for the ensuing year.

Every book our publishing houses issue, though printed in hitherto unheard-of editions, is snapped up practically immediately. The latest story of Sholokhov, *The Virgin Soil Upturned*, was published simultaneously in two editions of ten thousand and fifty thousand respectively.

The fact that the figures of pupils of our secondary and higher schools (universities) go into millions speaks for itself. Our schools may be good, or they may be bad, but one thing is certain, they are filled with millions of students. These millions, often without paper or textbooks, are overcoming all difficulties in their struggle for knowledge. In the provinces it sometimes happens that the pupils have to sleep in the schools, on the benches and the tables.

The theatres, both in the capitals and in the provinces are always cram-full, from the special children's theatres (there are five in Moscow) to such a theatre as that improvised in the early days of Magnitogorsk, in 1931—a hastily knocked-together shed in which when a sudden downpour leaked through the roof in streams the public was so anxious to stick it out that they used loose boards as umbrellas.

The Revolution has stirred to the depths the many millioned masses, made them thirsty for knowledge of what is going on in the world, what people are fighting for. The Revolution placed before them the most simple and at the same time the most profound of problems. The masses are seeking the answers in books, newspapers, poetry, films, schools—in fact, everywhere. And they do not only want to be given answers, they are already attempting to give their own. That is why

there is growing up a literature created not by specialists but by the masses themselves—often naive and clumsy in form, but interspersed with flashes of folk genius.

I once accompanied an old woman-worker from the Prokhorov textile factory to a meeting of local worker-correspondents called in connection with Maxim Gorki's jubilee. During the journey she presented me with a little book she had written herself. She told me that she had worked at the factory for some twenty-six years. After work, when the children and her husband are sleeping, after a whole day of toil, she sits herself down nowadays to write her little books.

'Isn't it better to get a good night's sleep than to sit writing books?'

'Oh no! If we old weavers do not write how we lived before, these young girls who now find it all done will not be able to appreciate what they have got.'

So this old woman, who learned to read and write only four years ago, publishes stories of the former life of women workers.

I have a great friend, formerly a stoker, a soldier in the civil war, since the war a party propagandist, and this stoker is a lover of classical philosophy. After an awful grind through Descartes, Spinoza and Hegel he came to the conclusion that without a knowledge of mathematics and natural science it was impossible to understand the development of philosophy. So for three years he made a passionate study of those sciences. His wife, also a worker, is a student in a medical school, and his sister has graduated from a worker's university. When their youngest hopeful, a boy of six, wanted nicknames for his family, he called them Sine and Cosine—because he heard these words so often.

This new civilization created by the masses is international. This does not mean that the wide masses of the Russian people

do not want to know Pushkin, Gogol, and Tolstoy, do not learn their native language through them, do not love them. Why, they are loved and studied no less in our schools by Jews from Minsk, Georgians from Tiflis, by young Uzbeks, Kirghizians and Mongols no less than by Russians. When a questionnaire was circulated on one of the Siberian State farms about the books they liked best, three agricultural workers—members of a literary circle—named *Quatre-vingt-treize*, by Victor Hugo, and *David Copperfield*, by Dickens. 'Bruski' ('Cross-bars'), by Panferov, they said, 'it is a good book about collective farms, but we know all about them, and anyway he's all wrong about how we peasants repair harness. That's no good.' The masses are thirsty for books about the lives of other peoples. Every such book translated from a foreign language—documents of the lives of other peoples or epochs—interests them deeply. In Moscow, for instance, thousands of people took part in the discussion as to whether the Vakhtangov Theatre interpreted *Hamlet* correctly.

This developing new culture is international not only in that it wishes to absorb both Homer and Balzac, not only in that a little Pioneer wept bitter tears reading in Danitowski's *Past Days* about how poor Ignaz perished pursuing a glow-worm that was to free his Aunt Bella from patching his torn knickers, and the Chinese through his hard toil. It is international because this culture is being created together by all the nationalities of the Soviet Union, by each developing its own.

In 1921 after his return from the Volga where he had observed the free development of the Tartar and Kalmuck culture, Professor Holder of the American Relief Administration said to me: 'Why do you help people who have never had their own culture by inventing an alphabet for them? Why help to develop national cultures which have hardly germinated? Teach them Russian. These independent

cultures will turn into enemies.' Professor Holder was a specialist in Russian history, but he acknowledged that Russian history was only understandable to him up to Peter the Great. 'As a matter of fact,' I answered him, 'even the period beginning with Peter the Great has gone for ever. We have raised a hundred million people to a higher stage of culture, but this it was possible to do only through developing their own language.'

I recently met a young woman of sharply Mongolian type, who with great pleasure was reading the *Iliad*, in Minski's translation. Here is her biography in brief. She is an Oirat. Her father is an ignorant peasant who still believes in the shamans. When in 1919 he wanted to force her to marry an old kulak she ran away from home. That was during the civil war, at the time of Kolchak. She ran away to the mountains where she found some partisan troops (or guerilla bands) who were struggling against Kolchak. She was very readily accepted, as on Kolchak's side were fighting cavalry detachments made of Oirats and related tribes. She acted as a scout, learnt Russian with her comrades and soon began to read. In reward, after the civil war, she was sent to school in Tomsk, and later to Moscow, to the University of the Peoples of the East.

It was then that for the first time in her life she travelled by a railway, as she had gone to Tomsk by river. She studied for three years in the Communist University of the Workers of the East, and then for two years more studied political economy.

'And what will you do now?'

'Along with a group of Oirats who have graduated from various universities I am going back home.'

'She's going to shamanize there before portraits of Marx and Lenin,' a friend of mine who was present at the conversation said jokingly.

'It is going to be difficult for us,' said the girl. 'We have



risen above our people, but we shall have to come down a bit to their level and then go forward together.'

And they are going forward thanks not only to books in their own language or to their own schools, but also to the Magnitogorsks and Kuznetskstroy. 'When ten thousand Kirghiz, in their caravans with their old men at the head, came to work at Kuznetskstroy, we were driven to despair,' the director of that giant concern once said to me. 'We simply had to fight the mothers to get them to wash their children. They did not understand Russian, and at every twist and turn they looked to the old men of the tribe for guidance. Now they are led not by the old ones, but by the young ones who are leaders of shock brigades, learning Russian, publishing newspapers in Kirghiz and who as they make propaganda, study how to work and teach others.'

By opening the gates of civilized life to all our nationalities, by helping the weakest to create such life, the Soviet Union has become a fatherland for each, and obtains from each its most precious individual elements for the common treasure house. The Soviet Union does not level down its peoples. On the contrary, it develops the peculiar national culture of each. Our culture is at one and the same time national and international; it draws vitality from the very nature of its social structure, from its own history, and at the same time from the general struggle of mankind.

This civilization is and always will be growing, growing by the struggle for ever greater cultural activity and by labour.

The civilization which existed before us was a civilization of the propertied classes.

Greek civilization was a civilization of slave-owners. They established their poetry, their philosophy, erected the majestic edifice of their art, on the shoulders of slaves.

The culture of the Renaissance was based on the exploitation by Rome of the whole Catholic world, and depended too on the commerce of Pisa, Florence and Venice.

The Rubenses and Rembrandts sprang from the Dutch patrician world, which was representative of the united forces of world trade.

Even when the art of previous ages did reflect struggle (as when Greek literature of the age of Aeschylus mirrored the struggle with Persia; the literature of the Renaissance and the Reformation, the struggle of the bourgeoisie outgrowing the feudal nobility; the literature of the period of enlightenment, the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the nobility)—even then it was a literature of the well-fed. In the whole of world literature there is no work in which the peasant tells us about his toil from the moment when what the eighteenth-century Polish poet Klenowicz calls ‘the eye of God’s day’ rises above the horizon, to the moment when he stretches out his exhausted body to rest. In the whole of world literature, but for a few exceptions during recent decades, there is not a book which reflects exactly how the worker lives. It is true you can find writers who have written about the life of toilers, but they have written like people peeping into a volcano over the edge of the crater. And when a peasant or a worker has happened to write about himself there has been no limit to people’s astonishment. Of such a book as the autobiography of the worker Wojcechowski, the Polish Press wrote as if it were the autobiography of an Eskimo or a native of Fiji.

Soviet culture is based upon the struggle and labour of the broad masses of the ‘common people’ of the Union. The soil out of which Soviet culture is developing is the struggle and labour of the broad masses of the Union. It is they whom it desires to serve. Its aim is not only to express their feelings and world-outlook but also to help them in their struggle for well-being, for the creation everywhere of conditions of life worthy of free men. Song arose from the rhythm of toil. We want to create a whole civilized activity which will help toiling man.

That does not mean that our art has to describe and reflect

only the struggle of our masses. It has to express the whole history of toiling mankind, the history of man's struggle with nature, of his struggle against oppression. The life of Copernicus who dared to overturn the earth from his monastery cell, is also included in our cultural inheritance, and strengthens our will to struggle as does the story of the English 'Diggers,' who at the dawn of capitalism in 1649 tried to establish agricultural collectives, or the heroic epic of those who during two hundred years in shackles, defended their ideals in Akatui and Nerchinsk.

Esthetes say that this will be purely conscious propaganda literature, and that it is impossible to *compel* a poet to feel an emotional shudder at the thought of great social upheavals. But had Beethoven to be *compelled* to create the *Eroica*? When the arts of civilization are made by the masses there will be no need to *compel* them to create in their own image. Undoubtedly they will create them. . . . People will read and listen; they will admire only those who reflect their feelings, dreams, and struggle. All that moves the heart of man will find its expression in this art—from the worship-pings of love to the doubts of a scientist working over the atomic theory, but they will all be united by one common aim in one common epoch of great struggle. Gustav does not have to die that Conrad should live. The struggling proletariat does not leave Joasia as Judym did; it rejoices, dies and conquers, together with Joasia.\*

Naturally a monolithic literature is not created all at once. Years will pass before the masses create it. So far we have this literature only in embryo. It is created by people who have sprung from the masses, who with difficulty are now mastering literary forms. It is created by the fellow-travellers

\* Mickiewicz's hero Gustav, expressing the personal in man's life, dies to give place to Conrad struggling for the social. When Zeromski's hero Judym decides to work in the underground socialist organisation he gives up his beloved Joasia. In both cases the personal was sacrificed for the social.

—writers who though they have come to us from the camps of other classes want to understand and portray the great social revolution. Whereas proletarian writers have to master difficulties of form, the fellow-travellers have to overcome difficulties of content, to learn to look at the world through the eyes of those who are reorganizing it. Soviet literature and art are being born amid struggles of outlook. There have been a number of attempts to make a simplified approach to it, attempts to create it 'to order,' but the Soviet leadership has always deprecated these attempts. Both Lenin and Stalin have defended the right of literature to go by its own ways towards the common objective, because they understood the peculiarities of its processes of development. Stalin, who like all great historical personages is an ardent lover of literature, points out that literature cannot be created by prescription. 'Write the truth,' he told Soviet writers. 'The truth about the Soviet Union cannot be as sweet as candy or as bright as a Tula samovar.'

The new Soviet reality is being made in a difficult struggle, at the cost of severe sacrifices, for which reason the new order requires a realistic art. When Sholokhov began to publish his epic of the struggle for collective farms, the émigré Press reprinted from it scenes which are terrible in their cruelty, but written with the greatest justice. They did not dare to reprint the whole story, because Sholokhov's truth tells of forces which are enabling the peasant to build life on a new foundation.

The competition of our own proletarian writers with the fellow-travellers, the struggle between the various literary forms, will give us a great literature, such as is to be found nowhere in the world. Even to-day the literature and art produced by the Revolution far surpasses modern bourgeois literature, for it reflects not a stagnant bog, but living streams of life.

Our civilization is Marxian. Fifty years have passed since

Marx died, yet so far the world has not produced a more complete or more scientifically grounded world outlook than the Marxian. Developed out of the struggles of German idealistic philosophy, out of the development of modern industry basing itself upon natural science, profiting by the experience of all social changes, Marxism has given the world not merely a theory of social evolution but also a method destined to have a profound effect on the natural sciences and to help complete the modern revolution in applied science.

For Soviet culture, Marxism is no dead dogma, even though it considers the Marxian system to rest upon a foundation which so far the hand of Time has not even touched. But since during the last fifty years mankind has passed from the epoch of industrial capitalism into the epoch of monopoly capitalism which has given birth to imperialism and then the world revolution, Marxian principles have to be examined in the light of the new facts; they have to be developed in accordance with the experience acquired. This further development of Marxism was begun by Lenin. At the present time, under the leadership of Stalin, we are living through a period of tremendous work of summing up the experience of the Soviet revolution, of the revolutions shaking the East, and of the phenomena presented by decaying capitalism.

We are establishing a giant industry which will revolutionize agriculture. Now we have familiarized ourselves with natural sciences and their modern application in daily life, we see clearly that they rely upon empirically created methods which are now obsolete. The deep inner disharmony of capitalist thought does not allow of the creation of a methodology on the same level that its practical application of knowledge obtained. In 1848 the bourgeoisie, being driven to the defence of its conquests from the proletariat, buried Hegel and his great dynamic conception of development through opposites (thesis and antithesis). The cowardly agnosticism of Kant, trivial empiricism, not to speak of all manner of mysticisms,

have fettered the brains and hands of the greatest scholars, scientists and engineers. The materialist dialectics of Marx is the thread of Ariadne which will lead human thought out of the labyrinth into the realm of natural science.

It is clear that Marxian dialectics, which in the field of social phenomena are in no wise a collection of dead formulæ, is still less such a collection in the field of natural science. Dialectics is not a tool with which scientists can be mechanically equipped. They must study independently to find it in their scientific material, then to sharpen and apply it in practice. The problem of dialectics in natural science is the central question of our struggles in the realm of philosophy. Decisive victory is assured us here by the work of our younger generation. Thousands and thousands of Soviet youth are working in laboratories under the guidance of our best physicists, chemists, biologists—our Joffes, Koltzovs, and Pavlovs—studying under them but at the same time teaching them.

The world hears of Dnieprostroys, Kuznetskstroys, of Magnitogorsk, of collective farms, but does not know yet that within ten years we shall be so advanced in science that we shall actually be able to surpass the whole world in its application.

We still have ahead of us years of heavy struggle, sacrifice and hardships. We shall conquer, because socialism has passed the period of simple destruction and is producing a new civilization based upon the widest masses. Every step forward means improvement in their material condition. That is why they fight so hard to master science and its application, to master literature and other forms of art. All this which lies before them serves as a weapon in the struggle for improvement of their material conditions.

Our civilization is essentially collective. The European scientist who works in the solitude of his laboratory or study does not think much about the fact that he is working by

means of instruments produced by others, on funds provided by society as a whole, or that the ideas by which he enriches the common treasury of science, from the language he uses in expressing them right down to mathematical formulæ, are the result of the collective creation of past generations. Writers who imagine they write by their own inspiration shrug their shoulders when they hear of 'collective culture.' They are like Molière's hero who did not know he spoke in prose.

But we know very well that there is no other civilization but collective. While insisting on this characteristic of civilization I only wish to observe that not only do we consciously put the fruits of civilization at the service of the collective whole of society, but we go farther and consciously draw the widest masses into the process of collective creation. With us, as they study, twelve-year-old children themselves teach younger ones. Among the working masses we give every stimulus to their urge to invent, because we take account of the fact that small technical improvements added up turn into great inventions.

This conscious organization of the effort towards civilization at the same time makes for the development of personality. Up till now individuality has been developed only at the cost of the degradation of the masses to the level of cattle. In the future, this development will lead, already does lead along the path of the mutual supplementing of millions of separate personalities by each other. Socialist culture is the culture of the millions of separate individualities working together and in this work developing their individual powers and abilities.

Never did old Russia have as many outstanding personalities as the Soviet Union to-day. Thousands, scores of thousands of workers are directors of factories, thousands of workers and peasants are at the head of the army and the schools; and these are only the first-fruits of the mighty

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generation of millions of strong and clear individuals which socialism in the making will create.

The bourgeois Press of the world and the Press of Social-Democracy, feeding on the garbage of the spiritual life of the bourgeoisie, does not notice all these processes. That is why it paints the difficulties of our construction in the most exaggerated colours and is quite unable to explain why we not only exist, but even make steady progress, while other nations either move backwards or at best mark time.

According to some the explanation is that we are pushing the country forward by sheer force; others find it in the fact that our youth is full of enthusiasm. As to force, it is difficult to see how other countries can bemoan the lack of that. If that is the solution, why do they not try by force to get over their crisis?

As to enthusiasm—enthusiasm is not manna, it does not drip down from heaven. Enthusiasm develops from the very fact that the Soviet proletariat has laid the foundations of a new social order which is in accordance with the interests of the masses of the people, and that this order has called forth such a participation of the masses in the creation of the new civilization as has never been seen in history. That is the source of our development and our strength, that is the source of the new values which the Soviet Union is giving the world—even if so far it has not produced such comforts (spiritual comforts, of course—we will not misunderstand) as might satisfy Mr Slonimski.\*

\*Mr. Slonimski is a Polish author who wrote a "spite-book" against the U.S.S.R.





## X

# THE POSITION OF WOMEN

### NOTE

[When a foreign workers' delegation in November, 1927, put a question to Stalin about the 'Russian Party . . . betraying the workers,' in his reply, among other mocking statements similar, Stalin said, 'Finally, we have decided to nationalize all women and to make it a practice to violate our own sisters' (*Leninism*, Vol. II, p. 87). Presumably the invention of lies about the 'nationalization of women' arose from the capitalist propagandists' desire (born of shame) to cover their behaviour towards their 'own' women. It is certainly instructive (or for cynics amusing) in 'democratic' Britain to-day, where women have the vote and unmarried girls 'have latch-keys' to observe the attitude of the average male towards 'his' womenfolk.

But anyway this new 'freedom' mainly concerns the more affluent classes. Girls of the major class—of the working class—have never enjoyed such seclusion or protection from which to be 'freed.' And what does capitalist civilization (with its apparatus of State education, its churches and powerful instruments such as wireless and cinema) do for working-class girls? Any who feel inclined to take a superior attitude towards Soviet workgirls learning to think Marxistically, in terms of building a new society, and classify this as a new form of priggery, should look more clearly as they walk through the streets of our towns at the underfed bodies beneath the film-star masks of the girls of this

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country—and glance at the gay display of rubbish on bookstalls ready to be bought by those girls as a way out of their despair—perhaps, too, investigate the lonely squalor of the country's 'business girls.'

Neither the vote nor the latch-key have made any difference to the position of the female sex in Britain. It is still regarded as essentially inferior in intelligence and other powers. This will continue until there is a Soviet Britain.

This paper of Radek's originally appeared as a review of Fannina Halle's book, *Woman in Soviet Russia* (published last year by Messrs. Routledge).  
A. B.]

## THE POSITION OF WOMEN

WHAT problems most interested the great thinkers of socialism when they tried to picture the socialistic society of the future? We might say there were four such problems. In the first place the need of affording all members of society the possibility of intellectual development; that is to say, the abolition of the gulf between physical and mental work. Secondly, the question of doing away with the gulf between town and country, that is, the idea that socialism should afford conditions not only for the development of industrial workers, but also for country workers. The education of children was the third problem which took their attention. But finally, all the creators of socialist theory have been concerned with the problem of the emancipation of women.

Our needs only point to the importance this question assumed with Fourier and the St Simonites. Marx repeatedly returns to it. One of the best propaganda works of Western European socialism after Marx's day was Bebel's book on the position of women in capitalist society and the prospects of the emancipation of women under socialism. Lenin came back again and again to the question. Stalin referred to it in his speech at the Collective Farmers' Congress.\* Such interest in the question of woman is not at all strange, for it concerns the destiny of half of mankind.

What progress have we made in this matter in the Soviet Union? As we achieve socialism amid difficult struggles, daily effecting changes in the structure of society, we are more apt to notice the economic changes which show in giant factories, new railroads, great housing developments, than the changes taking place in the mutual relations of the sexes and in their daily life. About the changes in our economic relation-

\* Compare *Leninism*; Vol. II.—(A. B.).

ships due to the carrying out of the Five-Year Plan in the city and country, hundreds of books and pamphlets have been written which adequately cover those gigantic conquests of our new civilization. Nobody though has written of how the life of children has changed, nobody has brought into one picture the thousands of facts there are on that one subject. Nor is there a single Soviet book which brings together the vast amount of material on the changes which have taken place in the status of women in the Soviet Union. The lack of such works is a great political blank. Unless we reckon up our achievements in any field we cannot realize how deeply the plough of the socialist revolution has tilled our Soviet land, how advanced already our socialist revolution is. When we say that we have already constructed the foundations of socialism, because we have broken and to a considerable extent abolished the former exploiting classes (as classes), because we have created a large-scale socialist industry, able to draw the development of rural economy in its wake, our statement might be interpreted to mean that it is only our economic relationships and the class structure of society which have been changed. The question may well be asked as to how far other sides of socialist construction have gone.

With the greatest interest we recently read a substantial volume by an Austrian writer, Fannina Halle, published several months ago and devoted to the status of women in the Soviet Union. When he or she finishes reading Fannina Halle's large book, in which she describes the lives of women workers and peasants in the Soviet Union, the reader is likely to put it down with a feeling of gratitude. First of all this book is an excellent reply to the libels of the bourgeois and Social-Democratic Press which picture the masses of the Soviet Union as unwilling executants of the 'Moscow dictator's' plan to establish 'a certain new order' in a backward and savage land by force. Fannina Halle, though herself not a communist, did not become familiar with the situation

in the Soviet Union merely by reading about it. For over a year she observed life in various parts of the Soviet Union at first hand. She came into contact with very varied strata of Soviet Society, observed life in factories, collective farms, hospitals and kindergartens. In her book she gives us a simple but living picture of the vast masses of people raised by the Revolution to conscious life—struggling, thinking, seeking answers to their questions, and organizing human relationships in a new way. Because of its descriptive character, and because it is not a sketch by a tourist observing a foreign country from the window of a sleeping-car, this book by Fannina Halle is of great significance for the Western European reader seeking to learn the truth about the Soviet Union.

But the Soviet reader will read it with hardly less pleasure or profit. Much that has escaped our consciousness for the reason that the eye does not notice the changes taking place from day to day, much that we have not ourselves taken count of, comes vividly to our mind as we read Halle's book. Precisely because the author came to us from capitalist Europe full of burning questions aroused in a thinking woman-socialist by the position of women in the capitalist world, she noticed every great new development in our country:

'In the land of the Soviets—in sharp contrast, it is true, to the one-sided masculine civilization of the West—something new in history has arisen, a society based upon the absolutely equal rights of the sexes . . . an experiment of world-wide significance: the experiment tried for the first time in human history, of according to both sexes the same right to mould our life.' (*Woman in Soviet Russia*, Fannina Halle; English translation, p. 396.)

is the author's conclusion arising out of all that she saw, read and thought in the Soviet Union. Thereby she also in effect says that in our country socialism is truly being built,

for there can be no equality of sexes without socialism. This indeed is the undercurrent of the whole book.

She starts out with a picture of the status of women in semi-servile and semi-capitalist Russia. Not only were working-class women and peasant women enslaved to men, denied even the right to get a passport without their husbands' consent, but women of the ruling class, though dressed in lace, and women of the petty bourgeoisie, were also in such a state of slavery. It is not surprising that from the very beginning of the liberation movement in Russia women played an outstanding part in it. Women have given us hundreds of heroic figures which have for all time entered the historical pantheon of the revolutionary movement.

Inequality was not only juridical and material inequality. The fact is that by not being able to play an independent role in life a woman of the 'upper circles' was reduced to being the sexual toy of a man. Women of the masses, workers and peasants, did work—a heavy life of toil—but toil of a limited type. Even those women who laboured in factory or field, were at the same time domestic beasts of burden; and those domestic beasts of burden were at the same time in a position of complete sexual subordination. It was precisely because the woman-workers and peasant women were not emancipated economically they could not even attempt to free themselves from their position of sexual slavery.

What changes have taken place thanks to the proletarian revolution?

First of all there has been established real equality of legal status. Our laws on marriage and divorce and on responsibility of the father for the child, to which we have already become accustomed, seemed to a woman coming from the capitalist world to be an unattainable ideal. It is a matter of plain fact that the very conception of a bastard child has disappeared among us, that we have taught Soviet society to regard with the deepest esteem any woman who gives life

to a child and to think of her as a member of society executing a most important social function.

The simple fact that we surround a pregnant woman with all possible attention is a fact of greatest significance. From the very beginning of the fifteen years of our existence we have been creating institutions and methods by means of which society takes upon itself a considerable share of the nurture of the child and thus relieves woman of some of the burden that weighed her down both physically and morally. We know that these institutions are insufficient and inadequate. We know that the number of crèches, children's playgrounds, dining-rooms, and communal laundries, and the quality of the work of those we have, is far from satisfactory. But for all that when you read the description of these institutions in Fannina Halle's book, you feel pride in our land, a pride in the Soviet proletariat and its achievements.

The author confesses that the capitalist world knows nothing like what we are doing. Yet we have taken tremendous steps forward during the last two years, since her book was written. What an important step the organizing of crèches, kindergartens, etc., in the collective farm villages was! It marked the beginning of the liberation of peasant women from the double burden of field work and care of children.

But the most decisive forward step has been the attraction into industry and collective farming of new millions and millions of women. This step marks a transition from giving aid to woman, from relieving her of the heavy burden which capitalist society had loaded on her back, to a direct expansion of her creative role in the country's economic life, which means the establishment of a material basis for woman's independence. In peasant households women had always played an independent role to a certain extent, because in their hands they held the domestic household, which included care of the poultry and cows. Women town workers also had an independence—that of taking care of the expenditure



of the pittance their husbands earned, but that independence brought them little but suffering. Those sufferings may have developed a typical womanly patience, a staying-power for bearing burdens, but they could not develop the many possibilities latent in a human being.

To-day women on the collective farm have a field in which they can give free rein to all their special abilities or their organizational talent. They share all the problems of developing the collective farms with the menfolk. These few years of the collective farm movement have already revealed numbers of gifted women in the countryside.

In industry women have advanced from carrying on minor functions to the most advanced machine work and responsible posts of all kinds. Like any other worker, they move up the industrial ladder according to their abilities. The years of the Five-Year Plan and the experience of the shock-worker movement have shown that women workers do not lag behind men either in sense of social responsibility or in capacity for practical engineering. Our engineering schools are full of young women fighting for the mastery of applied science. And those who have occasion to look into the lecture-rooms of our universities, or the hostels of our colleges, cannot help but see what immense new creative energy we have tapped by our vigorous move to draw women both to industrial work and to study.

In this way we have provided a means of solving the problem which lies heavy upon the woman of the West—the sexual question. Probably it is because Fannina Halle came to us from the West that she devotes almost half of her book to this problem. Over there in the West it stands out sharply before the intelligentsia. The old principles of family life are failing. One sees it reflected in bourgeois literature. It is sufficient to take such a book as H. G. Wells's novel, *The World of William Clissold*, to see the ruin of the bourgeois family even in sanctimonious England.

The capitalist world, despite the fact that millions of women have been drawn into a life of labour, thereby earning their own living, and therefore no longer satisfied to be enslaved, is unable to find a solution of the sexual problem, because one has to be free *not merely from something, but also for something*. A women who does not want to be confined any longer to kitchen and bedroom, who is looking for a free and full life, has to fill this life with something, to find a content for it. Her daily typewriting, or work in a shop or at the lathe, cannot completely fill her life. That can only be means to life. A sensational book by Judge B. B. Lindsey and W. Evans on *Companionate Marriage*, shows how the question of free relations between two persons in the capitalist countries, in bourgeois circles, is left hanging in the air.

To attempt to build relations between a man and a woman upon something more than sexual life means having the additional something on which to build them. Comradeship, friendship, are empty words, unless they mean comradeship in a struggle for some great social aim capable of binding people together, unless they mean common interests which can make the transition through the zone marked by the weakening of sexual interests less painful.

This problem finds its solution with us in a joint struggle by man and woman for the building of the new life. A joint struggle naturally will not do away with the fact that men and women often go apart. But such joint struggle, the emotional intimacy it promotes, the mutual esteem it fosters, the mutual aid that people in the struggle render each other, make a frivolous throwing-over of one person for another under the influence of a new erotic impulse more difficult. It creates a basis for sincere relations and helps both persons to see that sex is not the most important of *human* relations. Finally, by becoming a participant in the great struggle to liberate mankind, women who do not find happiness in personal life are no longer sere leaves torn away from the tree. Indeed,

Fannina Halle does not understand clearly enough that precisely the increasing participation of women in public life in the U.S.S.R., the rise in their social productivity, is one of the reasons why during recent years interest in the sexual problem has become less acute with us.

Life has not yet worked out final standards of relations between the sexes. Except for the root principle that a sexual union should not harm either one or other of the partners or society, life has not yet evolved any rules generally recognized by our young socialist society. Whether or not monogamic unions will gain supremacy, what will be the extent of the changes in sexual life, are matters for the future.

But some things are decided to a considerable extent and beyond doubt. One is that socialist society has learned to look with impartial eyes upon the sexual life of both man and woman. A second is that in the sexual-relationship it defends the woman as the weaker party. A third is that it sees its main task in the protection of the child from the consequences of a change in the relations between two people. And fourthly, sexual relations have ceased to play the role of a constant element of irritation, for ever causing conflicts.

These conquests of the socialist revolution are of great significance. By liberating woman from the role of a slave attached forever to kitchen and nursery, and by leading her out on to the broad field of social life, the socialist revolution has saved her from spending her strength and energy on exaggerated sexuality. It means that the liberated forces of half of mankind, instead of being scattered and spent, will be conserved and directed to a single social goal. Much of this is still in process of development, but conditions have already been achieved which allow not merely one-half, but the whole of society to take part in the task of liberating mankind and building up socialism.

As you read Fannina Halle's book and ponder these questions it becomes clear how far the building of socialism in the

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U.S.S.R. has gone. We have not merely liberated a great number of women from the handicaps and inequalities which weighed so heavily on them under capitalism, but already we have millions, scores of millions of women actually taking part in the upbuilding of socialism, a socialism which shall realize the dream of the founders of socialism, a dream of a world in which women and men shall be equals.



## XI

# THE RED AGAINST THE WHITE TERROR

### NOTE

[Apart from the campaigns of lies and slander led by newspapermen and ecclesiastical personages and other capitalist mouthpieces, there is so much sheer humbug talked about the dreadful 'red terror' that one could wish for the Soviet Government's note, drafted by Radek, and reprinted here, to be learned by heart in all schools in place of some of the wonderfully insipid or nauseating pieces so often selected for the purpose. It certainly must be included in any Red Treasury, not of 'songs and lyrics,' but of honest and noble writings.

But, of course, it is not very persuasive. It is merely a reminder of the facts of the million-fold terror of imperialist war. And since the million-fold terror of imperialism has as aim billion-fold profits, and can purchase the immense weapons of prejudice and ignorance for the campaign of lies and slander, by whom will the facts of the Soviet world of co-operation and peace be heard?

The answer is, of course, they will be heard by the masses whom they concern, because their proletarian ears are so attuned to proletarian facts that they can guess where the truth lies, and cannot but be critical of lurid yarns about Russia, whether served up by a 'Christian Protest Movement,' a reactionary newspaper, such as the *Daily Herald*, or a fascisising Labour Party Executive, which can remain silent about tyrannical acts against the working class in

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any capitalist country or imperial colony, but joins in the general reactionary cries of mortification when in the U.S.S.R. the instigators of fascist terrorism are discovered and punished. In this connection the essay which follows this one, written by Radek when a fascist murdered a French President, is of special interest. A. B.]

# THE RED AGAINST THE WHITE TERROR

*The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs to  
the Representatives of the Neutral Powers in Petrograd,  
September 5th, 1918.*

A REPLY TO THE JOINT NOTE OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS  
OF PETROGRAD (LENINGRAD) RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 5, 1918\*

THE note delivered to us on September 5th by the representatives of the neutral powers is an act of gross interference in the internal affairs of Russia. The Soviet Government

\* The representatives of the Diplomatic Corps at Petrograd, having been themselves witnesses of the arrest of great numbers of persons of all ages and both sexes, and the summary executions daily carried out by the soldiers of the Red Army, requested an interview with Commissar Zinoviev, who received them on Monday, 3rd September. They stated that they had no intention of interfering in the political contests at present disrupting Russia, but that taking a purely humanitarian point of view, they wished to express, in the name of the governments they represent, their profound indignation at the reign of terror instituted in the cities of Petrograd, Moscow, etc.

Without any other reason than that of gratifying their hate against a whole class of citizens, without orders from a legal power of any sort, crowds of armed men enter day and night into private houses, plunder and steal, arrest and throw into prison hundreds of unfortunate people entirely unconnected with political struggles, whose only crime is to belong to the middle classes, and whose extermination is proclaimed by the leaders of the country in their own papers and in their speeches. It is quite impossible for the poor distressed families to obtain any information as to the place where their relatives have been imprisoned, permission is denied them to communicate with the prisoners and to supply them with the necessary food.

Such acts of violence, incomprehensible on the part of men who profess their wish to promote the happiness of mankind, call forth the indignation of the civilized world, now acquainted with the events in Petrograd.

The Diplomatic Corps considered it its duty to inform Commissar Zinoviev of the feelings of reprobation which animate it. It has protested and it does protest energetically against the arbitrary acts which are being committed every day. The representatives of the powers make all express reservations as to the right of their Governments to demand the satisfactions which may be considered necessary and to render personally responsible before the courts all perpetrators of the criminal acts which have been committed or may be committed in future.

The Diplomatic Corps asks that the terms of the present note be brought to the knowledge of the Soviet Government.  
(Petrograd, September 5th, 1918.)

(Taken from *Foreign Relations of the U.S.A., 1918, Russia 1.*  
U.S. Printing Office, Bureau of Documents, Narkomindel Library).



might well ignore it. But the Soviet Government is always glad to avail itself of any opportunity to explain to the masses of all countries the essence of its policy, because the Soviet Government is the representative not only of the Russian working class but of all exploited mankind. The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs therefore gives the following answers to the questions raised in the note.

The Joint Note of the Representatives of the Neutral Powers:

The neutral powers endeavour to produce a picture of the present plight of the oppressed Russian bourgeoisie, a picture intended to evoke the deep sympathy of the bourgeoisie of the whole world. We have no intention of refuting the inventions of these gentlemen, representatives of the neutral powers, who in their note repeat all the libels sent abroad against the Red Army by the Russian bourgeoisie. We do not need to refute allegations concerning concrete cases of abuses, in the first place because these representatives of the neutral powers do not present any concrete facts, and secondly, because in any war—and we are going through a civil war—abuses by individual persons are always possible. But the representatives of the neutral powers do not protest against any specific abuses by irresponsible persons, but against the whole system of the Workers' and Peasants' Government in its struggle with the class of exploiters.

Before explaining why the Workers' and Peasants' Government makes use of this Red terror against which, in the name of humanitarian principles, gentlemen, the representatives of the neutral powers, protest, and on account of which they threaten us with the indignation of the whole civilized world, we shall allow ourselves to ask them a few questions.

Do Gentlemen the Representatives of the Neutral Powers know that we are already in the fifth year of an international war into which small cliques of financiers, generals and bureaucrats have plunged the masses of the whole world, so

that they may butcher each other, exterminate each other, in order that the capitalists may make billions of profit? Do you know that in this war not only have millions been killed at the front but that both sides have scattered bombs on open towns, and murdered defenceless women and children? Do you know that in this war, regardless of bourgeois international law, one side has condemned tens of millions of people on the other side to starvation by cutting off grain supplies, and that this particular side hoped that the starving to death of children would compel the other side to throw itself upon the mercy of the victor? Do you know that the other side has interned hundreds of thousands of defenceless civilians, citizens of the 'enemy' countries, sent them to forced labour far from hearth and home, and taken away from them any right of defence? Do you know that in all the belligerent countries the dominating capitalist reactionaries have denied the masses the right of assembly, freedom of the press, and the right of strike, and that for any attempt to protest against this white terror the bourgeoisie imprisons the workers or sends them to the front to kill in them any thought of their human rights?

All these pictures of working-class extermination in the interests of capital, all these pictures of the white terror of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, are well known to the rulers of the neutral capitalist states and to their representatives in Russia. But in spite of that either they have forgotten their lofty ideals of 'humanity' or they have just forgotten—apropos of these war horrors—to mention them to the bourgeoisie of the belligerent countries now streaming with the blood of the masses. The so-called neutral powers did not dare to protest by as much as one word against the white terror of capital nor did they even want to protest, because the bourgeoisie of all the neutral powers has been helping the capitalists of the belligerent countries to continue the war, and has made billions by supplying the camps of both belligerents.

And now may we allow ourselves to put you another questions? Have Gentlemen the Neutral Representatives heard nothing about the bloody massacre of the Sinn Feiners in Dublin, about the shooting without trial of scores of Irishmen led by Skeffington? Have they heard of the white terror in Finland, of the tens of thousands of workers languishing there in prison, of their wives and children who have neither been informed nor ever will be why their men have been taken from them? Have they heard of the mass executions of workers and peasants in the Ukraine, or of the mass shootings of workers by that valorous Czechoslovakian Legion in Siberia—those hired bandits of Franco-British capital?

The governments of the so-called 'neutral' powers doubtless have heard of these things, but it has never entered their heads to protest against the licentious way in which the bourgeoisie suppresses the labour movement, because they themselves, in their own countries, in defending the interests of the bourgeoisie, are obliged to suppress any manifestation of working-class discontent. It is sufficient to recall the recent suppressions of workers' demonstrations by military force in Denmark, Norway, Holland, Switzerland, etc. The workers of Switzerland, Holland and Denmark have not risen in revolution yet, but yet the governments of these countries mobilize military force at the slightest sign of mass protests.

If the representatives of the neutral powers choose to menace us with the indignation of the civilized world and to protest against the Red Terror in the name of the principles of humanity, may we remind them that they were sent here not to defend any 'principles of humanity,' but to defend the interests of their capitalist governments? We advise them not to threaten us with the indignation of a 'civilized world' which from head to foot is drenched in the blood of the common people. They would be better advised to fear the anger of the world's masses, who are rising against this

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'civilization' which has led mankind to the present desperate butchery.

In the whole capitalist world a régime of white terror prevails against the working class. The Russian working class has abolished the tsarist régime, which bloody régime never called forth any protest of 'neutral' states. The Russian working class further has put an end, in Russia, to the domination of the middle classes, who, under the flag of revolution, amid profound silence on the part of the neutral powers, shot soldiers unwilling to spill more blood in the interests of war speculators, and peasants for declaring as their property land they had ploughed for hundreds of years and watered with their sweat.

A large majority of the Russian people in the form of the Second Congress of the Workers', Peasants', Soldiers' and Cossacks' Deputies, gave power into the hands of the Workers' and Peasants' Government. A gang of capitalists who wanted to get back into their hands the factories and banks taken from them on behalf of the whole people and a horde of landlords who wanted to take back their land from the peasants, and a gang of generals itching once more to drum humility into the workers and the peasants, did not recognize this decision of the Russian people. With the help of foreign capital they mobilized counter-revolutionary bands, by whose aid they cut Russia off from food so that the bony hand of starvation should strangle the Russian revolution. Being persuaded of the impossibility of getting the masses to overthrow the Workers' Government they have organized counter-revolutionary revolts with the object of keeping the Workers' and Peasants' Government away from constructive work, of keeping it from leading the country out of the anarchy into which the criminal policy of the former government had led it. They have betrayed Russia to the imperialist governments, and called in foreign bayonets wherever it was possible to get them. Behind a forest of foreign bayonets they now send

hired assassins to remove those leaders of the working class in whom not only the Russian proletariat but the whole of distressed humanity sees the embodiment of their hopes.

Now, this counter-revolutionary clique, which is supported by foreign capital and by the Russian bourgeoisie, and aims at putting the noose of slavery and war on the neck of the Russian people, the Russian working classes will certainly suppress without mercy. And we hereby declare before the proletariat of the whole world that no hypocritical protests or requests will stay the hand which is to punish those who have taken arms against the workers and poor peasants of Russia, who would starve them, who would drive them to new wars in the interests of capital. We guarantee equal rights and freedom to all who loyally carry out all the duties laid upon citizens of the Workers' and Peasants' Russian Socialist Republic. To them we bring peace, but to our enemies, merciless war. We are confident that the great masses of all countries, oppressed and terrorized by small groups of exploiters, will understand that in our country force is used solely in the sacred interests of the liberation of the masses of the people, and moreover that they will not merely understand us, but will also follow our path.

Most emphatically we reject any interference whatsoever by the neutral capitalist powers acting on behalf of the Russian bourgeoisie, and declare that any attempt of the representatives of those powers to go beyond the limits of the lawful defence of the interests of their own citizens, we shall consider as an attempt to support the Russian counter-revolution.

## DEMONS

## NOTE

[To the communist, with his Marxist conception of the world and of life, there can be nothing more futile, more pointless, or more revolting than the assassination of individuals, however great their crimes. The following essay was written by Radek after a white guardist with typical fascist outlook murdered the French President M. Doumer.

This year has seen the assassination of fascist Dollfuss by a fascist of a rival group; the assassination of Alexander Karageorgevitch, King of Yugoslavia, and M. Barthou, by another Central European fascist; and this note is being written just after the news has come of the assassination of a much-beloved and much-respected, still-young leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)—Sergei Mironovitch Kirov.

The first week of December is not yet out as this is written. There are twenty-five more days to run. Fascism may produce other crimes before 1935 begins. Fascism thrives by terrorism. Now that the capitalist system of developing productive forces has reached a dead end in imperialism, now that the end of that system is definitely in sight—now that the fact that it is a choking stranglehold on every form of civilized activity is beginning to be obvious, not only to the awakened proletariat, but also to ever wider reaches of the black-coated and 'educated' classes, the parasitic ruling cliques become desperate and panic-stricken. To the good old 'democratic'

tricks for fooling the people into 'loyalty' is added terrorism. One common form of terrorism is assassination of prominent persons. Perhaps one could expect nothing better of the class which resorts to suppression of all progress than the stupid, primitive, historically-ignorant notion that by killing individuals the structure of society can be changed one way or the other.

This essay of Radek's was written specifically about the assassination of President Doumer, and of the general role of the white guardist Russian émigrés, as agitators for war. In the murder of Alexander Karageorgevitch and M. Barthou we have recently seen again how the forces of reaction—in that case represented by the fascist tools of Central European capital—try to provoke war; and now by the most dastardly murder of Kirov the tools of imperialist capital in general—assisted directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, by all fascising, anti-Soviet currents, from Russian white guardists to Labour Party Executive and T.U.C. bosses—point to the ultimate aim of the war that anti-socialist scoundrels wish to precipitate.

Now, a communist is a communist exactly because of his understanding of the structure of society, his conception of the revolutionary change in society which is taking place in the whole world to-day, is of the major class (the working classes) now become the life-blood of society, taking power from the minority class which has become an entirely unessential parasitic class. In this process individuals are neither here nor there.

But as you read Radek's essay the following general point is worth bearing in mind, as a guide to understanding what communism means. It is not an accident, but a logical result of its position as the fundamental class of modern society, that the proletariat, through its communist leadership, conceives of progress not through individual assassination, but through the action of a class. Similarly, it is not an accident, but a logical result of its parasitic position,

## DEMONS

that the capitalist class should fail to understand this, and in its desperation resort to acts of individual terrorism. In the post-war period this began with the first to be defeated—the white guardists—and we see it gradually developing into the typical weapon of fascist terrorism. A. B.]



## DEMONS

WHEN, in July 1914, by murdering the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the young Bosnian, Princip, started the eruption of world war, the political mechanism of the deed was clear to the whole world. A Yugoslav nationalist had shot a representative of the State which stood in the way of the unification of the Yugoslav people. A Russian white guardist, Gorgoulov, the son of a former Russian landowner, has just shot the President of the French Republic, which has not only given shelter to white refugees, but, what is more, still supports them and protects them. The political mechanism which released the trigger of Gorgoulov's weapon is not so simple nor so obvious. Yet the whole world should understand this mechanism, because Gorgoulov's in just the same way as Princip's endeavour by their shots to bring the volcano of war into action once again.

What does the programme of all white organisations consist of? One word can express it—war. The whites can conceive of no other means to a restoration. They have tried to overthrow the Soviet Government by personal terrorism, by assassinating Uritzky and wounding Lenin and preparing hundreds of other such deeds. They have learned how fruitless this way is. The Soviet Union is a pyramid which rests on a base of tens of millions of people. It cannot be overturned by pot-shots at the peak of it. The whites have dreamed of a mass rising against the Soviet Government. They still pretend in their writings that they do believe this possible, though they know it is only a form of consolation. One thing alone remains—war—a war of intervention against the U.S.S.R. or a general conflagration which would inevitably result in attack on the U.S.S.R. by the imperialists in order

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to remove from their rear that sixth part of the world in which socialism is really being built.

That part of the emigration which succeeded in exporting some part of its resources can do business, and is bound up with the capitalist world and maintains links with the leaders in the struggle against the Soviet Union. The Kreugers, the Deterdings, and the Urquharts are obliged by their influence to aid in the organization of intervention, and creatures of the Ryaboushinsky type, not merely in private, but openly, in papers like the white guardist Paris *Vozrozhdenie*, make them nice little reckonings how much they are likely to get out of a war against the U.S.S.R.

That part of the emigration which is now obliged to earn its living by sheer physical labour hates the Soviet Union as responsible for their 'degradation' from cream of society to exploited slaves. Only a war could bring them back their old position. Therefore—up war!

The dregs of the emigration, busy burning up their tindery lives in the vice-dens of the world, in San Francisco, in Paris, in Shanghai, see visions in their cocain exaltation—ships white as swans which will float them safely over the red waters back to the promised land, i.e., Russia of the 'good old days,' that is to say, a Russia in which workers and peasants are to labour to satisfy *their* artificial joys of life.

The white refugees wait on war just as a prisoner longs for the prison walls to fall down. But how is that war to be hastened? How are they to get to that intervention sooner? They neither can wait nor will they wait while the imperialist states wrangle and manœuvre, because they have not long left to live. The younger generation of the emigration may manage to find its place in life. But those who still recall the days of their supremacy in old tsarist Russia want things to hurry up, because they see death ahead. That is why they want a trick, some magic kind of means either to compel the Bolsheviks to start, or the imperialists against them. The trick

which comes to their pauper intelligence is—terror—the well-worn weapon of all weak and desperate people—the weapon which they imagine will prove a substitute for the strength of mass support.

At first the white refugees organised assassination of Soviet diplomatists outside the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. They killed Vorovsky and Voikov. They organized blowing up the Soviet Legation in Warsaw. They prepared endless fruitless attempts on the lives of Chicherin, Litvinov and other Soviet diplomatists. Surely they did not think this would frighten the Bolsheviks? They know our Party as a party which came to power at the cost of some of its best men, a Party not afraid of further sacrifices, if socialism demand them. These white guardist outrages had another aim. Their purpose was to convince the imperialist states that the white organizations are strong, and also to produce a situation in which the Soviet State would be driven to demand of the imperialist states some measures for the prevention of such white activity—of course with the object in view of provoking a war. They considered that a great country would not be able to put up with endless unpunished crimes against its representatives.

The terroristic activity of the whites has now gone beyond assassinations or attempts against Soviet diplomatists. It has switched on to a new track—that of terrorist acts against the representatives of those states which are in diplomatic relationships with the Soviet Union.

Anybody who wishes to grasp the underlying motives of the murder of the President of the French Republic by white guardist Paul Gorgoulov, should ponder a little over the way in which the white Press summed up the attempt made by Stern on the German diplomatist Twardowsky. There was a special sitting of the 'Central Russian Union' in Paris, consecrated to the memory of Stern. The Black Hundred Monarchist paper *Vozrozhdenie*, wrote of this as follows:

'This meeting, which passed in such flaming fervour—this modest commemoration of an agonized hero, has unquestionably become an event of social significance. In every speech which was made was to be heard a tone new to our emigration, a new tone, we may say, excited by the new turn of events in our fatherland initiated by the shot fired by Judah Stern.'

What was it in a shot fired by this Stern which was so pleasing to these impudent counter-revolutionaries in Paris?

'He fired at a German diplomatist, because the Russian people see in the Germans their chief enemy, preventing them from shaking off the power of the Soviets. Also by his shot Stern wished to call attention to the terrifying elemental pogrom which in Russia awaits all foreigners who show support of the Soviet Government and work with it' (*Vozrozhdenie*, April 26th, 1932).

Nor is it only this Paris white guardist rag that under the protection of the French authorities praises an attempt to assassinate a German diplomatist as representative of the first country to recognize the Soviet Government. There is more in it than a mere warming up of the Germanophobe humour of a section of the Russian emigration. Kerensky, though once 'leader' in a struggle 'to a victorious finish' against Germany, is no longer anti-German. But in *Dni* of March 20th, 1932, he wrote:

'Now, without doubt, Stern's shooting has echoed loudly enough and significantly enough in the hearts of the horde of foreign supporters of that Five-Year Plan so hateful to the people. It has resounded in those hearts only too well mulched with Bolshevist bribes, those hearts to which the arguments of reason or conscience have never reached. . . . Let those for whom it is meant give good ear now, before it is too late. . . .'

Finally we have an old acquaintance, the philosopher-feuilletonist of the Cadet Party's *Retch*—Yablonovsky—who in a review of Stern's motives in the Riga *Sevodnya*, of April

13th, 1932, wrote that out of two considerations the white guard terrorists have changed their butt and begun to shoot at foreign diplomatists.

'It is more advantageous for us—say the terrorists—in every way, to change our aim and strike at foreigners. The advantage of this is self-evident.'

Shots thus aimed—say the terrorists—make much more noise. . . . But there is also this consideration in their minds:

'A shot fired at a well-known foreigner is likely to cause the Bolsheviks great and serious difficulties, even to cause political complications. This shot will make Europe pause and think, as it is not accustomed to think of Russian matters.'

Thus we see there is a whole system of propaganda of terror against foreign diplomatists and in fact all foreigners who have connections with the Soviet Government. Counter-revolutionaries have tried to ruin the Five-Year Plan by wrecking. Now the white guardists are trying to hamper our construction by frightening foreign experts, and by frightening representatives of bourgeois states which have come to the realization that it is impossible not to reckon with the existence of the Soviet Union or to reject collaboration with it. Finally, these terrorists have decided to strike even at the representatives of states which though hostile to the U.S.S.R. cannot yet make up their minds to fight it. They had better take notice that 'the Russian people' as represented by Judah Stern and Paul Gorgoulov, formerly sentenced in Czechoslovakia for causing illegal abortion, will know how to punish those bourgeois states which have not the courage even to fight the U.S.S.R. Every shot of that kind 'will make much more noise', as Mr Yablonovsky says. People will not distinguish who does the shooting. The petty bourgeoisie of France, which hates the Bolsheviks for not paying the tsarist debts, and seeing in their President the very foundation of their

order of society, will not spend much time enquiring whether 'ce russe' who did the shooting is a white or a red—and for that matter there are enough persons in the French ruling class quite capable of turning this 'white' into a 'red' for the purposes of home consumption. The petty bourgeoisie will say—this is all work of the dirty Bolsheviks, let us demand steps against them."

*Vozrozhdenie* of March the 29th, 1932, wrote:

'Our only crime can be that, from now onwards, of inactivity, that is, of not utilizing the least possibility of striking a blow at the Bolsheviks.'

A few days later (April 5th) this journal declared:

'It is our duty to risk something, it is our duty to take advantage of every opportunity which comes our way.'

So, you see, no ambiguity about it, there is the signal given out to the white guard organizations. The time for shootings has come, say the white bandits, we must get a move on.

In his lampoon on the Russian revolutionary intellectuals in *Demons*, the great Russian reactionary writer, Dostoievsky, has depicted creatures who commit absolutely senseless crimes in the hopes of those crimes causing disturbances likely to enable a 'revolution' to be made behind the back of the people, so to say. This was a lampoon on the Netchaiev type. But the real revolution succeeded through the heroic struggle of millions of the national masses. But to-day those Dostoievsky figures have come to life, in most paradoxical manner, in the 'heroes' of the Russian counter-revolution. They are unable to count on any mass support from the people busy constructing a socialist world, and so they have a try at provocation, adventures, attempts at creating disorder. Will they suddenly succeed in causing a world conflagration, in quenching their thirst by the blood of the millions of the people? These white guardists have hopes that

one of these shots of theirs will have the same result as the Sarajevo shot of July, 1914. This species of vermin, in its death throes, would turn on and bite and infect the whole world.

But this vermin has been fed by the imperialists. *They* are its protectors, they fit it out with military academies, they protect its freedom of incitement to crime. Under the protection of the French police, which arrests every communist who is suspected of 'relations with Moscow' these white guardist rags are at liberty not only to incite to murder of representatives of the Soviet Government, but also to murders of representatives of imperialist powers.

Now the French protectors of the white refugees have gathered in the first harvest of their policy. In spite of all the wriggings of the advocates of French imperialism, all the French Press printed Gorgoulov's confession that he, murderer of the French President, was a white guardist and an enemy of the Soviets. We quite understand the need of the Paris police and its prompters to invent fables about Gorgoulov's 'neo-Bolshevism'—Gorgoulov who on the twentieth page of his 'green programme' openly describes himself as a fascist. We can only tender our sympathy to those persons who find that the emblem printed on Gorgoulov's pamphlet, the emblem consisting of a design of a skull and cross-bones, a St. George's Cross and two scythes, reminds them of the Soviet hammer and sickle. But then, can we expect them to come out with a public announcement to all respectable French shopkeepers that our dear President was killed by one of our guests, by one of our dearest guests, by a white guardist, by one of those on whom we have spent so much money?

This thing which has taken place in Paris is one of those misfortunes which are quite common while an explosion is being prepared. It has already happened before that bombs prepared by terrorists have gone off in their own hands.

The white guards—these are the bomb prepared and concealed by the enemies of the Soviet Government for the purpose of flinging at the edifice of socialist construction. But the white guard bomb consists of living people. Impatient people. In their bestial stupidity they are incapable of understanding, or do not want to understand, the difficulties standing between them and intervention. They want to hurry things up, to spur on their own masters. They do not understand that the first thing the imperialists have to do is fashion a kind of united front against the U.S.S.R., in order to make sure intervention does not turn into a general imperialist collapse.

But the white guards cannot wait for this united front, which again and again is broken down by the interlacing contradictions of imperialism. If one imperialist country would take on the job of starting, it would be so much jollier for them. The imperialists need cover for their advance against the Soviet Union, they need preparation, they need various favourable circumstances, because they have got to reckon with their own peoples, who are hostile to any attack on the Soviet Union. But the white guardist, having what wits he does possess mainly concentrated on his drinking-den, considers all this loss of time. If French politicians are afraid of the Paris workers, Gorgoulov is ready with a recipe against that: 'the wild communists and commissars must simply be strung up wholesale, without mercy, on telegraph poles, and lamp-posts.' And if the French authorities are chary of setting about this, well, they must be stirred up. Let them see there are some brave lads who are not half asleep, brave lads who are full of courage—to shoot a bullet into the head of an old man like Doumer. . . .

The weapon sharpened by the imperialists for use against the Soviet Union has turned against its makers. But anyone who may have imagined for a moment that the imperialists would turn and smash up their own hirelings need only read the Paris Press from the scented publications of openly fascist



Coty or the sweetly aromatic pages of the organ of the Second International, the *Populaire*, published by that humane socialist Léon Blum.\* Coty bellows: 'Gorgoulov is an agent of the Bolsheviks—the whites are our friends, Gorgoulov must be guillotined as a Bolshevik.' Mr Léon Blum defends the whites with more finesse. He is far from using the crime of a 'madman' as a reason for accusing any political group whatsoever. But Coty's bellowing and Blum's sweet mouthings come to the same thing—don't touch the white guards, the time to use them will come yet.

However much Messrs Coty and Blum try, their efforts are in vain. They cannot conceal the fact that the President of the French Republic fell at the deed of a snake which that republic of French imperialists had warmed in its own bosom. And the working masses of the whole world will learn that lurking by the powder magazines created by world imperialism there are cocainists, dipsomaniacs, prostitutes' bullies and the like with bombs in hand thinking of one thing and one thing only—how to involve the world in a war, how to start the conflagration in which they might make their attempt to rob the workers and peasants of the U.S.S.R. of what they have won by the revolution. And the masses of the people will find means of destroying the vermin.

\* Cf. the *Daily Herald's* espousal of the cause of terrorists executed in the U.S.S.R. (issue of December 21st, 1934).—A. B.

### XIII

## THREE ESSAYS ON IMPERIALISM

### *NOTE*

[The following three essays fit together and make a group dealing with aspects of imperialism. 'Hideyoshi' deals with the first failure of Japan, at the time of nascent capitalism in Europe, to expand into China; 'Sun-Yat-Sen' deals with the birth and rise in China of a movement which will defeat the present attempt of Japan (and other capitalist powers) to acquire China as field for expansion; and, finally, apropos of a man who was once engaged in turning tsarist Russia, where the end of the capitalist epoch began as a break in the imperialist front, into a virtual colony, Radek gives us a little theoretical treatment of the matter.

Perhaps the paper on Sun-Yat-Sen is the most important. Readers who have dabbled a little in Marxist theory and are not quite clear about what is meant by a 'democratic revolution' in distinction from a working-class revolution, will obtain considerable light on this from the history of Sun-Yat-Sen. As against feudal China the 'democratic' revolution seemed a step forward—Sun-Yat-Sen lived to see that another step was required. In the form of the Kuomintang Government the Chinese 'democratic' revolution now provides foreign imperialism with an ally within the country, and slaughters the Chinese people to further capitalism. The Indian Congress is another such body.

The future lies with the working-class revolution which has begun in China. This essay on Sun-Yat-Sen bears the date March 14th, 1925. It was written

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before the Chinese Soviet Government was constituted. One-sixth of China is now under the rule of the Chinese Soviets. This government of the workers and peasant farmers represents an area four times as great as that of Britain. In world history it is of immense importance. A. B.]

## HIDEYOSHI

IT was towards the end of the sixteenth century that a rumour went all over Asia of white men coming from afar on swift ships and penetrating into the countries of the East. Asia rather looked down on these pale westerners. By their handiwork the foreigners were able to impress neither India nor China. But they began to come with firearms in hand and to seize harbour towns, and to try to penetrate deep into the country, or else they wormed their way in as missionaries carrying the teaching of Christ. 'When they get disciples they will make them into armies and seize our country,' was then said both at the courts of the feudal Asiatic nobility, and among the populace.

In Japan at that time Hideyoshi was ruler. From a simple peasant, a vagabond soldier, Hideyoshi had by intellect and energy forced his way up to the position of military commander-in-chief. Relying on detachments of his former comrades with whom he had once begged bread on the highway, Hideyoshi took power into his hands and tried to break the resistance of the feudal princes in order to establish a centralized Japanese government. This predecessor of the Tokugaw Shoguns understood the menace of the European colonizers. He prohibited the preaching of the Jesuit missionaries and began to put impediments in the way of foreign merchants. But these measures alone did not end the danger of foreign invasion. If the Europeans were able to seize China, if they occupied Korea, they would be able to throw troops across from the Asiatic continent to the islands of Japan, and that would be the end of everything.

Hideyoshi was a contemporary of Philip II and of Queen Elizabeth, and about the time of the Spanish Armada which was making ready to attack England, he organized a Japanese

armada, threw troops over to the mainland and in 1592 seized Korea. The stories of his Japanese and Chinese contemporaries about the half-a-million-strong army of Hideyoshi are probably greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, relatively speaking, Hideyoshi's expedition ranks as the greatest exploit of Japanese feudalism in its armed endeavour to defend itself against rising European capitalism.

Hideyoshi's struggle lasted six years. 'I will take China under my arms like a mat and carry it away,' this warrior, who had vanquished many of the feudal clans of Japan, used to say. But even at that early date, even in the sixteenth century it was hardly possible to take China under your arm like a mat and carry it away. Anybody who went into China came away defeated or else stayed stuck there. And when Hideyoshi's expedition ended in disaster, when Hideyoshi recognized his powerlessness, when he was dying, on a piece of silk he traced his deep disillusion

'As a drop I fall  
As a drop I disappear.  
Even the fortress of Osaka  
In deep slumber is but a dream.'

But defeat of feudal Japan did not mean its destruction. European capitalism was then too weak to conquer China, and two and a half centuries were to pass before it could start upon this task. Japan of the period of the Tokugawa Shoguns locked her gates, turned her back on the rest of the world and tried to live on her islands, without letting in foreign merchants, without seeking profit in trade with other countries.

The Japanese ruling classes who have their history, an instructive patriotic legend, still recall the greatness of Hideyoshi, but they do not make much study of the lessons of his life. The history of modern imperialism, the history of its great conquests and great failures, the approaching crash of the imperialist system, even this does not hint to

### THREE ESSAYS ON IMPERIALISM

them even what it whispered to dying Clemenceau—Clemenceau who in his book about his victories used a title of deep significance: *The Grandeur and Misery of Victory*. Never has Japan had so much reason to ponder on Hideyoshi and his quatrain as now. Japan is fighting 'against both sun and wind,' as the Germans say.

In this age in which negroes in the forests and deserts of Africa are beginning to feel their racial unity, when national consciousness is embracing nations which never before had a national government or a national culture, when the whole East is experiencing an unprecedented growth of nationalist movements, Japan has decided to challenge the four-hundred-million-strong Chinese people, a people of ancient culture, a people of extraordinary vitality, a people now establishing a modern state and struggling for the conditions of cultured life. This people has risen against special privileges for foreign imperialists. In 1925, by taking down the British flag from the Hankow Consulate, they made proud British imperialism waver. The self-interested and short-sighted ruling classes of China have for the moment stifled the great nationalist passion of the masses and choked it in the blood of workers and peasants. But in the pangs of struggle against counter-revolution and foreign imperialism, in shame and humiliation, the will of the people and nation of China is growing and strengthening. Possibly a long period of ferocious struggle with their counter-revolution and against the intervention of the imperialist powers will be needed before the Chinese people become as a rock upon which their enemies will break their heads. But those who follow the course of events in China can distinguish the outlines of the new China through the bloody fog in which counter-revolution has veiled that great country.

The best sons of China were formerly her scientists, weaving a slender web of thought, people isolated from life, on the one hand; and on the other her poverty-stricken masses,

desperately struggling for human living conditions, dark and ignorant, whom imperialism now labels bandits. But now an idea, sharp as a sword, an idea based on the experience of the international revolutionary movement, has gripped that ragged nation, that nation that goes into battle barefooted, with bloodstained feet, that nation which is evidently losing patience.

When through great struggles the Chinese people crystallizes out, the balance of forces in the world will change, because the appearance of four hundred millions on the stage of history will open a great new historic page. Woe to those nations which do not realize without delay the future greatness of China, or which did not hear in the struggle at Chapei the iron tread of the battalions of the coming People's Army of China. Woe to the nations who attempt to restrain this historic flood and think to plunder China before she gets on her feet.

From the point of view of their own interests and their own politics the ruling classes of Japan could present a thousand arguments to justify their acts against China. Those arguments are neither better nor worse than those by which the imperialists of the co-called white countries justify their campaigns and their conquests. When the Japanese diplomat Sato through clenched teeth asked the Areopagus of Geneva—that gathering of representatives of the capitalist countries—‘And what sort of judges are you?’ truth was on his side. But when Japan gets entangled in armed struggle with China, when her armies have broken the back-bone of the last anti-revolutionary government of China,\* and when Japan, weakened by those battles, finds herself face to face with the

\* (Since this was written Chinese Soviets have been formed, and the Chinese bourgeoisie tends to accept Japanese imperialism and Western imperialism as a weapon against the Chinese people. But it must be observed what a two-edged weapon this treachery of the Chinese bourgeoisie to their own revolution proves: the popular nationalist anti-foreigners feelings of the masses provide the Chinese Red Army with allies within the counter-revolutionary Chinese ranks).—A. B.

### THREE ESSAYS ON IMPERIALISM

raging sea of China's masses, these correct references to the fact that she had done nothing that other capitalist powers have not done will not help her. What will happen then is that through the lips of the Chinese masses history will repeat the words a German poet threw in the face of the Napoleonic armies when after having defeated Germany and trampled her underfoot, they returned themselves utterly broken from the snowy plains of Russia.

'Defeat them—  
The tribunal of history  
Will not ask you for reasons.'

When Japanese cannon defeated tsarism on the fields of Manchuria, Russian revolutionists had no illusions as to the intentions or motives of Japan, but they did acknowledge that in Japan progressive Asia had beaten backward Europe. Now, in those imperialist groups of Japan which have turned on the land of the Soviets and are trying to mobilize against it the policy of their country, we see a backward Asia, rapacious, and at the same time pitiable, in its folly taking arms against a progressive and revolutionary Europe.

In spite of the fact that the equality of Japan within the family of the capitalist powers is quite illusory, in spite of the false, hypocritical compliments that bourgeois diplomacy showers upon Japan, from time to time, the Japanese people are for the capitalist world a yellow people, a contemptible people. For the toilers of Japan the door into the United States, as into many British colonies, is closed. The Soviet Union is the only country which, even at present, at a time of strained relations, has not for a single moment forgotten the respect due to the great achievements of Japan, to the way she has broken away through the barriers of feudal theocracy by science and engineering. In search of assistance in developing its economic life the Soviet Union turned to Japanese railway



management just as it turned to Germany for assistance in the development of its chemistry or the United States in the development of its tractor industry. The working class of the U.S.S.R. endeavours to find just the same kind of heart as beats in its own breast under the coloured Japanese kimono. If at any time the toilers of Japan knock at the door of the U.S.S.R. in search of work, or brotherly relations, they will find them.

But those in Japan who work to strain relations with the Soviet Union, those who try to arouse hostility against a people which advocates equality for all races, are trying to draw their country into a struggle in which it will find nothing but defeat. We can declare without boasting that our country is bigger than Japan, both in human and material resources. Our country was the first to step out manfully on the path of struggle for the new order, the first to awaken social forces of which the capitalist world has no conception. In case of danger it will arm armies of millions sufficient to close all its borders. At the time of the intervention of 1918-1920 the Soviet land showed how it was able to overcome difficulties and space, famine and ruin. Now that the foundations of the new social order have been completed and our resources increased a hundredfold, now that the country has been given wings of inspiration, it is ludicrous to think of a victory of the Japanese imperialists over us. We are aware that war with Japan would let loose other hostile forces. We do not shout, we do not toss up our hats. We know that such a war would cause the greatest distress to our people and to the Japanese people too. Therefore the Government of our country has repeatedly and unequivocally raised its voice in warning against the dangers that are threatening the world. There can hardly be anyone either in Europe or in the whole world who really believes that the Soviet Union will thoughtlessly rush into a war, that it will not do everything possible to escape armed conflict. But at the same time we do know that in

any such war the Japanese ruling classes will only find a tomb.

Japanese imperialism has thrown down a challenge to the great Chinese nation. The adventurist elements of Japanese imperialism are now working to strain relations between Japan and the Soviet Union. They are doing it at the very moment when a menacing enemy has appeared in Japan's rear. That is American imperialism, which considers that the division of China would be America's greatest historic defeat. The American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Stimson, has said plainly that the East may yet provide one of those historical conflicts which are capable of 'throwing the whole world into confusion.' The experience of the world war showed that America is drawn into war slowly, but anyone who follows the American Press attentively can see that the whole machine of American politics has been turned against Japan, and that manufacture of their public opinion to support a war against Japan is already proceeding.

The Japanese military clique soothes itself with the fact that Japan's seizure of Manchuria has relieved her from the danger of blockade, that Manchuria will provide her with food and the iron and the coal necessary for war. But Japan has not sufficient capital to develop Manchuria and she may not have time for it either. Moreover modern aviation has also changed the conditions of war. In case of war American industry can produce flocks of steel vultures able to make the country of the rising sun a land of smoking ashes.

In such an atmosphere it needs madness to create new fronts against oneself, to make an enemy of a great country which stands aside from the struggle which is rending the imperialist world asunder, a country which does not seek profit at the expense of other nations, which only asks for the maintenance of peace on its borders and respect for its interests.

When he was defeated in Korea, Hideyoshi was able to go back to the Japanese islands, where calm awaited him. But if the present-day Japanese ruling classes begin weakening themselves in military adventures—and their financial situation is threatening enough already—if they further undermine their already shaky economic structure, this time no heroic legends about war and its brave deeds will save them at home. They may say what they will about the unshakable principles of Japanese life, about their faithfulness to the ideals of their ancestors, Japanese literature—mirror of Japanese life—shows that this is all apple-sauce. The old Japanese nobility has united with the capitalist class of to-day; the canker of speculation is devouring it, the lust for profit. The working class is seeking new shores and the peasant cannot go on living in the old way. The Japanese intelligentsia is very unsettled. No matter how many laws the Japanese Government brings forward against 'dangerous thoughts,' new conditions will go on giving birth to new thoughts. In Europe, unfortunately, there is but little knowledge of the intricacies of Japanese politics. But from the Japanese Press we learn about mass arrests in Japan. We hear shots which in a short time have removed first a Japanese premier, then a Japanese Minister of Finance and then the head of a great capitalist concern. One cannot view those events otherwise than the first lightning-flashes of the storms which are moving down on Japan.

Let the dominant classes of Japan ponder their position and its prospects. Their situation is more difficult than that of Germany before the war. Either Japan will be isolated and destroyed at the decisive moment or, despite her present military strength, she will be the object of an Anglo-American struggle. The decisive factor in a great war is economic reserves, in which Japan is poor. The attempt to solve the contradiction of the Japanese situation by way of war can end only in a great defeat for Japan. There is no complete

solution of her difficulties under the existing capitalist order. But in friendly co-operation with the peoples of the Asiatic Continent, by assisting them and obtaining in exchange all she needs, Japan still has a great future ahead. By struggling against all the great currents of history she is steering direct for the greatest calamities and the greatest of defeats.

The way of agreement, agreement not directed against the masses of other countries, is the way of peace. The way in which Japan is going is fraught with great calamities not only for the Japanese people but for the whole world, because it may lead to world war. Japan's decision is not merely Japan's business; it concerns us all, and for that reason we are all thinking now of what Japan is going to do. The Soviet Union sincerely desires Japan to choose a path which may lead her on to the way of peace. The workers and peasants of the Soviet Union are not afraid to face the storms of history. They were born in one. Storms will not break the young tree of socialism. It is like steel; strong, supple. But the storm will break the rotting tree of capitalism.

It is not for us to grieve about the fate of capitalism, but, being firm in our deep conviction of the inevitability of the transition from capitalism to higher forms of social life, the working class of the U.S.S.R. does not feel any need to spur history on. It has taken upon itself the Herculean task of tilling the world from the River Beresina to the Pacific Ocean. It is sure that by fulfilling this task it will prove to all toilers the superiority of the new, rising order over the old.

War holds out gross sufferings for the peoples of the whole world. It is true that it will break down obstacles to socialism, but it will exhaust and undermine material forces for a decade, it will bleed the masses of the peoples white. For this reason we are passionate opponents of the solution by war of the capitalist contradictions which have again accumulated in the whole world. For this reason the Soviet Union will defend peace with the greatest vigour, and any who wish to fight will

have to take the initiative, will have to take on themselves a responsibility which will destroy them.

The path of the Soviet Union is clear and straight. As representative of the interests of all who work it does not want war. It is not out for profit, and does not want to be drawn into the imperialist brawl, because it never will enrich itself at the expense of other nations and cannot strike bargains against the common people of other countries. But it is watching the gathering clouds, it sees how charged with electricity the air is. It is on guard and will not be taken unawares. If called on to fight it will have the right to look for temporary allies among those capitalist powers which at the given moment do not happen to have laid hand on its territory or its interests. It will lead the struggle relying on the help of all the best there is in mankind—on the help of the toilers of the whole world—with the knowledge that in any international association, with whatever disposition of world forces, the country of the Soviets is struggling not for the greedy self-interest of financial cliques, or for the dying land-owning classes, or for military castes, but for the peace and welfare of all mankind.

## SUN-YAT-SEN

March 14th, 1925

THE Chinese people have lost their best son. Sun-Yat-Sen is dead. He was a symbol of the revival of the Chinese people. The great masses of China, awakened to life by their great sufferings, will stand at his grave in deep sorrow. The capitalist Press which formerly glorified him as a great reformer will now sneer and represent him as a wild dreamer who in his old age fell under Bolshevik influence. The proletariat of the U.S.S.R. and the revolutionary part of the world proletariat will take leave of Sun-Yat-Sen in sorrow as a great leader of the people of China—a revolutionist whose forty years' experience of revolutionary activity taught him that the salvation of the Oriental peoples lies in their union with the revolutionary proletariat of the West.

Not long ago, the more progressive currents of China joined with us in our great grief at the death of Lenin. This fact is witness that Sun-Yat-Sen is not an exception, that wide masses of Chinese society have realized who is their enemy and who their ally. We are deeply moved by the news of the death of Sun-Yat-Sen. As we lower the standard of the Communist International over his tomb we feel kinship with the struggling Chinese people in our joint loss. Just as the people's revolutionaries of China seek to understand what it was that Lenin symbolized, what class forces he expressed, we must understand the life and work of the great teacher of the Chinese people. We must understand this in order to carry out Lenin's great bequest—to achieve the unification of the struggling international proletariat with the peoples of the East.

Sun-Yat-Sen was a son of poor parents. He was born in 1867 in the south of China in the province of Kwantung. He was born three years after the British Major Gordon at the

head of a band of European adventurers and hired troops of the Manchu dynasty suppressed the uprising of the Taipings. When little Sun was born, homesteads were still burning, the guerilla struggle of the remnants of the rebel troops was still going on. But China lay defenceless at the feet of foreign capital. Only the economic depression which soon after began in Europe saved China from immediate dismemberment. The spies of capitalism were scouring the country, studying its wealth and its customs, choosing points for further attack. Capitalist influence penetrated the country through the open ports of Canton and Shanghai, and entrenched itself firmly first in the coastal provinces. The Pekin court was very troubled by this invasion. As for the masses of the nation, they suffered from lack of cohesion. They had lost some three million people in the Taiping revolt, and they had lost hope of freeing themselves by their own efforts alone from foreign domination or from the dynasty which by the aid of its bureaucratic apparatus was busy sucking away their last stores of strength. The French and British were advancing from the south; Japan from the north.

Among Chinese scholars with a knowledge of the international situation and a sense of the growing feebleness of their country, the opinion began to grow that only serious reform could save China. In 1880 the scholar Kang Yu-wei wrote a memorandum pointing out that the Chinese bureaucracy was mercenary and inefficient, and that the country was breaking up into many independent governorships. Kang wrote: 'He who to-day adheres to the old methods and old views not only fails to understand the needs of the State, but has moved far away from the views of our wise men of olden times.' He pointed to the reforms in Japan and stated that only similarly radical steps could save China. The directors of the Pekin Academy refused to pass Kang's memorandum on to the Emperor; it seemed heretical. China, they said, might have lost her former strength, but she still had the only true

knowledge—that taught her by her great ancient teacher Confucius—and the overseas barbarians could not possibly be dangerous.

Then came the Sino-Japanese war. China was not merely conquered; her weakness and feebleness were exposed to the whole world. A peace scandalously humiliating for China was concluded at Shimonoseki. At a great gathering of scholars assembled in Peking for the state examinations, held on May 29th, 1895, Kang presented a second memorandum demanding reform of the Chinese bureaucracy. In his memorandum he said 'Chinese departmental positions are occupied not by those who know what to do to help peasant and craftsman, not by men with administrative ability, but by those who can pay the most for a soft job. Some are taught what they will never use, and others are not using what they were taught.' He pointed to the progress of modern industry and trade and demanded their encouragement in China. He demanded abolition of the customs barriers between provinces and aid for the peasantry.

Under the influence of their defeat in war the Government censors did transmit this memorandum to the dowager and her son-emperor. The emperor ordered the memorandum to be sent to the provincial governors with instructions to put the proposed reforms into practice. He would have liked to receive the reformer personally, but this was forbidden, because Kang Yu-wei was not of the proper rank. But Kang obtained a position in the Ministry of Social Politics which gave him the right to present memoranda, and one after another he prepared them, in an attempt to familiarize the dynasty with the dangers menacing the country. He pointed to the tsarist and Japanese threats in the North, the threat of France in the South, the occupation of Kiao-Chow by Germany. China could be saved only by the formation of a modern army.

'Since our shameful defeat in the war with Japan,' he wrote,



‘the European powers look upon us with disdain as upon savages and treat us as stupid peasants; they place us on a level with negroes. Formerly they hated us as an arrogant people, now they make mock of us as stupid, blind and dumb. Foreigners from all over the world are trying to get concessions. They demand our bones, our flesh. They are carving pieces from our body and will go on till nothing remains. Foreigners are getting railway concessions. From north and south we are threatened by destruction. We must remember the fate of Turkey, Korea, Annam and Poland.’ Kang wrote *Reflections on the Reorganization of Japan*, *Reflections on the Reorganization of Russia under Peter the Great*. He wrote a biography of Peter the Great and sent it to the young emperor. The emperor appointed him as his advisor and began feverishly trying to put the proposed reforms into practice.

From the emperor’s palace emissaries were sent into the provinces with instructions to organize the Press and the schools, and to reorganize the army. This attempt at reforms from above lasted only a hundred days. The bureaucracy revolted against it. These reforms have put the masses on their feet, checked the high-handedness of the bureaucracy and limited their takings. But each man of them had paid a great deal for his place. The most influential strata of the scholars, the ‘custodians of tradition,’ saw these attempts at reforms as sacrilege against the old doctrines. The old empress, Tsi-si, headed these bureaucratic conspirators, organized a change of government, arrested the young emperor Hu An-su, and locked him in a beautiful palace on an island, where he died true to Kang’s teaching.

The theory that a dominant class is unable to reform itself, renounce its privileges, unless forced to by mass pressure, was proved once more by history. Kang fled abroad, and China went on decaying, victim of its own bureaucracy and of foreign capital. The old empress could see the growing discontent of the masses. She attempted to direct it against

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foreigners, and subsidized the organization of the 'Boxer Rising.' This rising was most barbarically suppressed by an international military expedition and merely delivered a helpless, completely crushed China over to foreign capital.

With the twentieth century began the partition of China. Almost the whole of international imperialist literature of the time was devoted to the dividing up of China among the imperialist powers. The economic development that began in the last decade of the nineteenth century compelled England, Germany and France to search for new markets. Tsarist Russia was afraid of not getting her share, and hastened to seize Korea and Manchuria. The Russo-Japanese war which concerned Chinese territory was prepared. Seemingly there was no salvation for China.

In the south, where the Taiping revolt had originated, where the reformer Kang was born, Sun-Yat-Sen grew up. When he had passed through a village national school, he spent several years in the Hawaiian Islands, where his brother was engaged in trade, and then returned to Hong-Kong and studied medicine in the English schools. But Sun-Yat-Sen, young, sensitive and warm hearted, was not satisfied with science. He looked about him and pondered on the destiny of his country. The popular rising of the Taipings filled him with deep disappointment. How could the illiterate Chinese people ever struggle against European powers armed with modern science and technique? He decided that it was first of all necessary to enable the people to rise culturally, to study; only that way would China become equal to the advanced nations of the West. But how were the great masses of China to be liberated? Sun did not belong to the scholar caste and did not believe in the revival of China by means of reforms voluntarily carried out by the old civil service led by the last dynasty.

He came to the conclusion that the first step would have to be the overthrow of the barbarous Manchu dynasty which

had seized China in the seventeenth century. His idea was conspiracy, but he found only three associates prepared to follow him on that dangerous road. During the Sino-Japanese war he established a Society for China's Revival. Propaganda began in the army; guns were purchased. The conspiracy failed and on September 9th, 1895, Sun-Yat-Sen's comrade Luko Dun was executed. Sun-Yat-Sen escaped abroad.

Years as a refugee, years of study, now followed, mostly spent in great poverty. Young Sun travelled to all the countries where there were Chinese living—Japan, the British colonies, America, England. Living by his scientific work, and a certain amount of help from supporters, Sun tried to get into touch with young Chinese studying abroad, and with Chinese traders. He made a careful study of the governmental structure of European and American states. He began to see that behind the facade of capitalist prosperity lay hidden the want of the masses. He himself had been born in poverty, and it was no matter of indifference to him. He was in sympathy with socialism, only he considered that socialist tendencies were premature in China because of the lack of an industrial proletariat. Democracy—especially American democracy—was his ideal of governmental structure. The way to the ideal led through conspiracy—and first of all through military conspiracy.

Kang's experience had completely persuaded Sun-Yat-Sen that all attempts to reform the country under the Manchu dynasty were bound to fail. But on whom could he rely? Only a generation which understood the necessity for democratic reform would be able to bring about the change. This meant those students and young soldiers studying the art of war who were convinced that China's salvation lay in breaking with the old way. Sun-Yat-Sen put students who were influenced by him on the right road, entered into relations with the garrisons, and himself went from town to town carrying

on his propaganda. He was well versed in the international situation and conscious of the contradictions between the capitalist powers. So he intrigued in Japan, hoping to find aid in the country which by decisive internal changes had saved itself from foreign capital. He did find a certain amount of support in Japan, even in ruling circles, for they considered that his propaganda would help to weaken a China already in decay. He found support too in certain American circles, which hoped on the contrary that the revolutionary movement would at least compel China to reform and that this would strengthen the country. Being economically strong, America was not afraid of other countries' competition and was against any attempt to divide China. She came out for the policy of the 'open door,' i.e., for the admittance to China of the foreign capital of all countries on equal terms.

Sun-Yat-Sen's group was successful in the army. Just like the Russian Decembrists who found response among the young officers who had been engaged in war against the French Revolution and Napoleon, and who comparing Russia with the West became persuaded that without reforms Russia would remain as a huge but helpless child, some of the young Chinese officers educated in Europe saw the great danger threatening China and joined the revolutionary camp. Financial disorder and a series of famine years caused discontent in the army. In 1911 an uprising broke out at Uchango. It spread and gained one victory after another. Sun-Yat-Sen hurried from America via London to China, where he was the very symbol and leader of the uprising. After the victory and the overthrow of the dynasty he was elected president of the Chinese republic.

Sun-Yat-Sen seemingly had attained his aim. A parliament assembled at Nanking. But Sun-Yat-Sen's victory now became defeat. The Manchu dynasty had been overthrown, but the whole apparatus on which it relied—the provincial bureaucracy, and the corps of military officers—remained

untouched, because the revolt was one of the army only, and the masses of the people were only just beginning to move. The intelligentsia was hardly represented at all in the parliament.

The great powers which had refused to support the falling dynasty by loans would not grant any loan to Sun-Yat-Sen. They were afraid thorough reorganization might strengthen China; they saw in the Chinese revolution a most threatening manifestation of the influence of the Russian revolution of 1905 in the East, which might spread to India and the Asiatic colonies of France. International capital came to an understanding with the Chinese permanent official class and with the officer class. Yuan Shi-kai was the figure-head of this union. Sun-Yat-Sen had no effective forces to put up against Yuan Shi-kai and so had to yield the presidency to him and retire from the Government. The military conspiracy had been strong enough to sweep away the corrupt dynasty but was powerless to clear reaction out of the whole country or remove more than a few of the parasites that clung to the body of China. The foreign powers granted a loan to Yuan Shi-kai.

New years of emigration, of suffering, and of contemplation, came for Sun-Yat-Sen. The world war broke out. Japanese troops proceeded to 'liberate' China from the Germans but only in order to occupy Shantung themselves and prepare for seizing the whole of China. The great powers had their hands full in Europe. The United States had only just begun to build up a great fleet and enlarge its army, and could not yet offer resistance to Japan's pretensions. In an agreement between the American Secretary of State, Lansing, and the Japanese Ambassador to America, Ishi, the United States recognized that Japan had special interests in China. Japan was at China's throat trying to force her acceptance of a list of twenty-one demands which would have meant the complete bondage of the Chinese people.

China, seeking for salvation, declared war on Germany.

She was, of course, not in a position to carry on any war, but as an ally of the great powers expected their support against the Japanese imperialists. Suddenly a ray of hope illuminated the seemingly dark future of China: Wilson began preaching the self-determination of nations. The great democracy of the North proclaimed 'a mighty word.' The hopes of the masses and of the Chinese intelligentsia were raised.

Then the day of the Versailles Peace arrived and gave the province of Shantung, with its forty million Chinese, into the hands of Japan. The disappointment and disillusionment of the Chinese were unbounded. Sun, who had carried on his propaganda all the time and was in constant touch with his own South, could see no way out. Echoes of the great Russian Revolution reached China. The British and American telegraph agencies disseminated the foulest and grossest libels about it, but the very ferocity of their attacks were proof for Sun-Yat-Sen that a new force opposed to world imperialism was growing on the plains of Russia. He began to pay close attention to all news really coming from that country. The victors of Versailles declared war on Soviet Russia, or, rather, began a war to exterminate it without declaring war. But the new Russia put up a defence, which from the masses, though fatigued by the imperialist war, called forth enormous fresh stores of strength. And after two and a half years of heroic struggle they conquered the Entente. Sun-Yat-Sen's spirit revived. In the Russian revolution he perceived a new ally.

At first it was only an external ally for him. Sun did not yet understand the reason for the strength of the Russian revolution. Although he had seized power in the south of China, at Canton, he was still unable to make effective contact with the masses, for whom he was no more than a great patriot, a defender of China's independence. He was still full of notions about liberating China by means of diplomatic intrigues and military campaigns. He thought that after his advent to power the foreign powers would stop their attempts

to divide China and would render economic assistance to China, which would put her on her feet. But the defeat of Kolchak by the Red Army broke down the barrier between China and Soviet Russia. Regular communication was re-established between the two countries; Russian revolutionaries went to China, and Chinese to Russia.

Sun-Yat-Sen, old now, continued his studies. He realized his dependence upon the Chinese upper classes and the Canton merchants, who would not permit any really radical reforms, though without reforms Sun could not see his way to lead any national revolution. And without a national revolution China was unable to cope with the military clique, which after the fall of the dynasty had dismembered the huge country and was battenning on the disconnected provinces. Union with Soviet Russia, which was what Sun was aiming at, could not remain a mere external political alliance. It set the industrial workers in motion (the factory proletariat in China was estimated at three million), it began to influence the peasants who had formerly been able only to form partisan or spontaneous guerilla detachments and uprisings.

The Workers' and Peasants' movement provoked counter-action by the bourgeoisie. They began to organize and arm against Sun in Canton. Sun then took a decisive step. He founded a revolutionary army to be used against the bourgeoisie and proposed a programme of peasant reforms and an advanced labour policy. Sun-Yat-Sen organized the forces of the people not only in Canton province but also throughout China. He met resistance in those circles of his own party which had middle-class connections, and so struggled against the people's revolution. But Sun had made up his mind. Neither the threats of British imperialism, which was preparing to attack him, nor the danger of a split in the party, should deter him. He had chosen his path and, however thorny it might be, he was going to stick to it. But death has now overtaken him.

Before us is the life of a man who will go down to history as a great symbol of the awakening of the largest nation on earth. Before us is a life full of travail, suffering, hard thinking, and struggle. Before us is a great deed started but not yet completed. Chinese workers and peasants, the active intelligentsia whom Sun aroused, who consider him their teacher, will complete it.

But the especial greatness of this life is that the man who lived it was incessantly moving forward. After each defeat he rose again learning from his experience, studying anew. The revolution of the Taipings had begun in the South; it had had the same aims as Sun came to after his experience with the policies of conspiracy and diplomatic use of the contradictions between the imperialists. But the revolutionary movement in China to-day is in a different position from that of the Taipings. Hung, the great predecessor of Sun-Yat-Sen—the leader of the Taiping revolution—who perished in 1864, looked on the sufferings of the Chinese peasantry and evolved his ideal of a Kingdom of Labour—on the basis of the Bible!

The revolt of the Taipings was suppressed because it had no working-class support in Europe. The European working class did not even know of the tragedy of a nation which was being enacted on the shores of the Yang-Tse-Kiang. But the Chinese revolutionary movement of to-day has mighty backing in the Russian revolution, it has the growing strength of the world proletariat behind it. European imperialists cannot now attack revolutionary China without running the risk of serious trouble in 'their own' countries. And the forces of China itself have grown immensely during this time. In order now to hold China in its hands foreign capital would have to mobilize an army of millions. What Sun-Yat-Sen began will therefore be completed. The Chinese people may expect much suffering, the Chinese revolutionists have much to learn before they obtain the full support of the masses of



China, but the seed sown by Sun-Yat-Sen is growing and the plant will produce rich fruit.

In 1916, at the height of the world war, at a small Bolshevik meeting in Berne, when discussing the question of the self determination of nations, Lenin threw out the idea of our joining forces with the future Chinese revolution. It seemed a mere fantasy. The Swiss group of refugees, five or six Bolsheviks, in Comrade Shklovski's rooms, and the idea that the Russian proletariat and the multi-millions masses of China would ever fight together! Who of us that were present at that meeting really thought we should see the dream fulfilled?

In 1918, when the Czechoslovakians, the Social-Revolutionaries and Kolchak were between us and China, Lenin asked if it would not be possible, among Chinese coolies come to slave in tsarist Russia, but awakened now by the October Revolution, to find some brave enough to form links with the forces of Sun-Yat-Sen. This contact with the masses of the Chinese people is now established. And it must be our life-aim as well as that of the Chinese revolutionists, to bring scores of millions into this union. Then half the victory of the world proletariat will have been won. Our graveside farewell to Sun can be made with calm assurance that his like-task will be accomplished.

One of the greatest historical services of Lenin is that in the union of the European proletariat with the oppressed people of the East he saw the lever with which the world will be moved. In their struggle for emancipation the Chinese people can be proud of Sun-Yat-Sen as the first great leader of peoples of the East to understand Lenin's thought and to do all in his power to put it into practice. It gives him an honourable place among the greatest people of history and better than any other power will make his name live long in the memory of all peoples once oppressed.

# A LESSON IN MARXISM FOR MR LESLIE URQUHART

December 1st, 1925

DEAR MR URQUHART,

When I read your letter to the editors of *Izvestia* I felt how much we have wronged you. Only to think what we have brought you to by dragging out the negotiations for a contract with you!

Mr Leslie Urquhart to turn to Marx; and to studying him both in English and Russian translations!

After that we are surprised at the outcry in the English Press about the horrors of Bolshevik terrorism!

The capitalists of the world have been exploiting workers for hundreds of years, but not one of them has hitherto been driven to study Marx as punishment.

To think that in order to get to Kishtim you have to do such terrible reading. The consciousness of our guilt, however, does not free me from the necessity of telling you that you have made no more progress in studying Marxism than I have in studying the English language. However often in London I might try to talk to one of your 'bobbies,' I was always passed on to another one who talked French. But since you have taken up lessons in Marxism, pray continue. Perhaps it will bring you better results than your negotiations with the Soviet government. For my part, I will try to point out for you the mistakes you have made in your first steps in the field of Marxism.

You are certainly proceeding from a Marxian standpoint when you say that the political structure of a given country in a given epoch is determined by the predominant means of production and exchange, and the social order following therefrom. You infer from this that no government can force on

the country which elected it, an agreement which is in contradiction with the social order of that country. Both these statements are correct. But what of the deductions which you draw from them? Your first deduction is that the agreement concluded by the Labour government of Great Britain with the Soviet government, whereby the British government was to guarantee loans made to the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics by the English banks, if an agreement were reached with the Soviet government concerning debts and compensation for damage, clashes with the social order of England and therefore could not be put into practice. You make no attempt to prove your deduction. Your remark that it is the capitalists and not the government who dispose of money in England is no proof of your assertion that there is a contradiction between the social order of England and the agreement. The agreement put no obligation on British capitalists to give us money. You need not bother to remind Mr Ramsay MacDonald that to obtain possession of some chairs at Downing Street is far from being the same as obtaining possession of certain safes in the City of London. The Communist Party of Great Britain is busy with the spreading of that reflection and you need not bother to compete with them.

No. That agreement merely facilitated the banks making loans if agreements be reached on other matters under dispute. And since what date has facilitation of the activities of the bankers by the British government been in contradiction with the social order of Britain? If the British capitalists have overturned the Labour government of Britain that is not because they were afraid lest that agreement shake the foundations of the social order in Britain, but because they thought that a Labour government dependent on the working masses might not shake the social foundations of other countries vigorously enough, and especially those of the U.S.S.R., China, and the colonial countries.

In spite of the course of Marxism through which you have so

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heroically ploughed, you and your brethren who have not been so valiant apply that principle you mention only to Britain—namely, the principle that no government, however strong, is able from outside to force onto a country a policy in contradiction to its social order. For instance, you do not follow this Marxian principle in respect of Russia. You declare that if it has serious intentions of attracting foreign capital to Russia the Soviet government must of necessity adapt itself to certain conditions (the aims of international capital) even at the cost of rejecting other principles which now happen to be the foundation of the social structure of Russia. Thus to that Marxian statement that the external policy of a country is related to its social order—you make an exception in the case of Russia. You seem to suppose that the power of the Soviet government is so great that it can do anything, even reverse the laws of Marxism. That is illogical, Mr Urquhart. But you will answer that it contradicts only abstract formal logic, and that we Marxists, namely you and I, do not stand on the ground of formal logic, but of dialectics? Let us take a glance at your dialectical arguments for the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. from government by those Marxian laws you recognize.

You cite the passage in the *Communist Manifesto* in which the great teacher we both recognize speaks of the drive of capital towards shaping the world after its own form and image. You point out that by the cheapness of their goods the bourgeoisie break down the Chinese Walls of backwardness and attract barbarian nations into the circle of civilization, and in the same way place rural areas in dependence on urban, non-civilized and semi-civilized countries on civilized, agrarian nations on industrial, East on West. There is no question but that this Marxian law correctly describes the way in which the world bourgeoisie and the capitalist order develop the exploitation of the world. But to be a dialectician (which is your claim) one needs to perceive not

only those tendencies which with his eye of genius Marx was able to perceive in 1848, but also those which you, Mr Urquhart, with your naked eye, without any genius, could observe to-day without even leaving the stuffy labyrinth of the City. Have you really not noticed during the last few decades, in the course of which you have done so much business with the contemptible uncivilized or semi-civilized East, that not only does capitalism strive to master the East, but the East also strives to free itself from the domination of western-European capitalism? I should have thought that the Russo-Japanese war of 1904 alone would have opened the eyes of all western-European capitalists to this fact. But after that war the world saw the Russian revolution of 1905, the Turkish and Persian revolutions of 1908, the Chinese revolution of 1912, a tremendous series of colonial uprisings, the Russian revolution of 1917 and a new series of revolutionary shocks from the Pacific Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. And it is in the very first place into your British capitalist heads that the East is hammering this science of ours of the tendencies of world evolution.

Your Marxism, Mr Urquhart, is the Marxism of a book-worm honey-combing himself with quotations but quite unable to use the Marxian method to study living reality. This phenomenon which we might call *wooden Marxism* is often observed in England. Due to the fact that since the sixteenth century (when you cut off the heads of your kings so well that our dear and beloved 'little father' Ivan the Terrible got quite huffed and presented the ambassador of such an ignoble nation with his passports) you have made no revolutions, the practical brain of Englishmen has become rigid and bad at generalizations. You either lose yourselves in hair-splitting about petty matters or seize hold of vast generalities and use them woodenly, as they are, whether they fit or not. As examples of hair-splitting about petty matters your late justly-removed Ministers, Mr Ramsay MacDonald, Mr

Snowden and Mr Webb may serve. And Old Hyndman as an example of the arm-chair Marxist. To escape the pettiness of the Webbs you became a pupil of Hyndman the crank. You are apparently incapable of using the weapon of Marxism for the study of new life. This methodological error keeps you from comprehending even your own experience.

Following the Marxian thesis about the capitalist order subordinating semi-civilized countries, the West trying to dominate the East, you have tried to help that subordination, by the Archangel expedition, by supporting Kolchak and and Denikin. And in this you have applied all your old experience acquired in India, which Professor Seeley so interestingly described in his lectures *The Expansion of England*—a most instructive book for us Russians. To the question how the miracle happened that a small handful of Englishmen conquered the immense Indian continent, Professor Seeley answers that England did it by utilizing the disunity of India, the clash of interests between maharajahs and lowly ryots. In 1918 you attempted to take possession of Russia, of course assuring the Russian maharajahs that you were doing this for their re-establishment, and not to secure English domination. But how did that affair end? Those contemptible ryots, the Russian peasants, led by the Russian workers, drove out the whites and you were not strong enough yourselves to throw into Russia millions of your own soldiers. You went broke, Mr. Urquhart, you left Kolchak to shift for himself, and returned to England with only what you stood up in. Now the bankrupt who understands the reasons for his failure is not quite a lost man. Real failure begins only when the bankrupt lets his imagination run riot, and finds consolation in the sweet illusion of some miracle which is to save him and return him his lost possessions. But, you know, if you want Soviet Russia for colony you must conquer it, by the bayonet, or by the noose of starvation, or by the noose of your filthy lucre. You have not got the bayonets, we are

coping with your blockade, and your filthy lucre is not sufficient to go round the neck of Soviet Russia.

You take great pleasure in quoting the passage in which Marx describes England as despot of the world market. It is wonderful how that word 'despot,' and especially 'despot of the world market,' has pleased *you*, a citizen of free democratic England. Mr Urquhart, I hope you will excuse my indelicacy if I say that when you recall that epithet of Marx's (by which he certainly did not intend to flatter capitalist England) you are just like an old lady simpering as she recalls those wonderful compliments the gentlemen used to make her. Now if such a Queen of Spades sighs over long-withered compliments as memories of a pleasant past, that is at worst a price paid by the weakness of the human heart; but if she passes to using those long-past compliments as a start towards capturing young boys, it turns into something disgusting which may react most painfully on the sentimental old dame's heart, and lead to unpleasant practical results.

I am fully aware that as head of the 'Russian Asiatic Bank' and a member of a capitalist society you are not at all in an enviable position. I should not like to wound your heart, but my duty as one who has taken upon himself the task of correcting your non-Marxian aberrations, compels me, alas! (not for the world—but for *your* benefit, Mr Urquhart) to say that England is no longer the despot of the world market. It was so in days long past, during your Manchester youth, when the stars of Bright and Cobden still shone on the horizon, and the manufacturers of England were able to consider England as the workshop of the world, and the world her supplier of raw materials. Those times are long past. You rushed into war with Germany to remove that young rival; you have scratched her eyes out; but your own daughter, the United States of America, has so come out that you dare not be seen in society with her, because even the blind would not be able to help thinking how over-ripe you have become.

To speak without poetical illustrations, which I have only done to gild the bitter pill, you have fallen deucedly behind, you British capitalists. The capitalist organism of Britain is diseased all over; you are choked by asthma; your Indian stomach and the spinal nerve of Suez are diseased; your nervous system is completely out of order and that is why your Canadian and Australian extremities jerk independent of your conscious will; only your mouth and gullet and belly are as gluttonous as ever, so your hands go reaching out for new food, though they are unable to convey it to the mouth. You need to take a cure. You need to go steady, you must give up all idea of new conquests in the East. Even if you were to succeed in swallowing a biggish chunk it would stick in your throat, or a stronger or younger dog would snatch it from you. The study of Marxism might have great hygienic—let alone curative—importance for your ruling class.

But I do not want any uncertainty to remain concerning one of the points you raise. In the last part of your letter you point to a passage in Marx in which he says that the French revolution of 1848 could not conquer within the national framework, without a revolutionary war, because England dominated the world market. From this you draw the deduction that Soviet Russia should recognize that since world revolution has not succeeded in the first post-war years it is necessary to revise the principles of Soviet policy, not to rely any more upon the aid of the revolutionary West, but to give in to capitalist Europe.

I know that you are a very diligent reader of *Izvestia* and *Pravda*. Therefore I hope that after writing your letter you have been paying the attention a young student of Marxism should to the great discussion about 'permanent revolution' which has been going on in our Party organs. This discussion should make it amply clear to you that we, having studied the experience of the seven years' existence of Soviet Russia and of parallel world developments, have come to the conclusion



that many of us had come to simplify reality in quite a non-Marxian manner. It is true that world revolution has not succeeded, but yet world revolution has sufficiently shaken world capitalism to keep it from war against us.

It gives us a breathing-space. For example we are now reading the harsh speeches reported in your conservative Press. We even hear that Mr Chamberlain is trying to incite that good soul Herriot to form a Holy Union against us. Of course we shall undertake precautionary counter-measures, but confidentially I may inform you that though the dream is frightful, 'God is merciful,' and we think like the German proverb which runs 'Nobody takes his porridge as hot as it is cooked.'

You blackmail us a little—that is, not you, of course, Mr Urquhart, most loyal friend of Soviet Russia, who quarrel with us only because you don't understand Marxism—but the Conservative Government of Britain and the industrial and financial circles behind it. But we are not a particularly scary people. 'Our country is large and abundant, only it lacks order,' as a poetic chronicler once said, some centuries ago. But we at last are introducing order without waiting for Varangians—though if they came without invitation they would get what they deserve—and we hope to prove that even with a world revolution developing slowly (and it is developing, it is idle of you to lapse into Kautskyism and touch up the world picture in capitalist colours) it is possible to retain power in the hands of the working class, and what is more, to use this power for a slow but permanent establishment of socialism.

There was a time when theorists of young English capitalism were sure a single Englishman only needed a hatchet and a barrel of powder on a desert island to build up with his bare hands a decent capitalist farm. You probably have read *Robinson Crusoe*, not in an adaptation for children, but in the original, as written by that genius Defoe. Do you remember

how after he had captured man Friday, Crusoe taught the 'native' to call him Lord, and what an excellent household he established. I have often re-read that marvellous work of Defoe, because it exemplifies the brave spirit of a young class establishing a new order. I do not mean to say that we shall teach our Fridays to call us lords; we shall teach them to look on us as their comrades and we are sure that the development of their abilities will not suffer by this. All your great economists from Adam Smith to John Stuart Mill taught us that slavery is the worst system of production. But maybe you will say that we do not live on a desert island, that our blood-thirsty neighbours will not allow us slowly and uninterruptedly to build socialism.

If so you have forgotten Defoe. Robinson was in danger not only of being conquered, but of being eaten up in the literal sense! You English are islanders too, but I hope you are more human than the cannibals of the Carribean Islands and do not intend to eat us. But were you to tell us you would like to taste the Russian dish once more, you would only remind us of the pretentious young lady who declared in company that she would love to see Nice again, but when asked if she had been there, said 'No, I only wanted to once.' You wanted to, Mr Urquhart, but we do not advise you to want any more, long wanting has weakened your teeth.

The lecture has turned out too lengthy; that is bad from the pedagogical point of view. I will break it off in the hope that you will continue your studies of Marxism. If you will allow me, I should very much advise you to read not only Marx but also Lenin, because in the epoch of imperialism and world revolution, enriched by experience and new phenomena, Marxism has taken the form of Leninism. People who in the epoch of imperialism and the world revolution want to stop at Marx, become followers of Kautsky but Kautskyanism is a transitional form and it is impossible to stay transitional. Kautskyans generally slither down into a commonplace liberalism.

I am quite aware that you never have been a liberal and there is no sense in your taking up ideas of that sort which have outlived their time. If you continue your study of Marxism and get into your head once and for all time that it is impossible to make Soviet Russia into a colony, we shall be able to get along together. It would be lovely to see you as a Red factory director combining a Marxist and Leninist education with great administrative experience.

But if you want to work in Russia as a concessionaire without overcoming your petty middle-class individualism I shall be quite glad to have a chat with you about the *modus vivendi* of socialist and private economy. That would be the second part of these Lessons in Applied Marxism. But it is impossible in the second lesson to keep on going back to problems already studied, such as colonies, expansion of the capitalist West, the barbaric East, etc. Such repetitions are necessary only in lessons for backward children.

With deepest respect,

I remain,

Very truly yours,

KARL RADEK.

P.S.—If you need assistance in your studies of Marxism-Leninism remember I am ready at any time to come to England to be your tutor.

I hope that the Conservative Government which just two years ago refused me entry would then grant me a visa. You yourself say you are not afraid any more of world revolution.

K. R.

## XIV

# INTELLECTUALS

### NOTE

[There now follows a second group of three essays. One deals with a prominent member of the British intelligentsia, a famous pacifist, who visited the U.S.S.R. but who did not approve of the force necessary for maintaining working-class rule. It is doubtful whether polemical irony could be more justly directed than that which ends this essay.

The other two deal with two members of the old Russian intelligentsia, who also did not approve of working-class rule. They worked against it, and eventually found their way into the dock. It must be emphasized that these studies in class polemics have not been included in this book as make-weight, or for want of more 'generally interesting' material. Fifteen other essays, on various subjects, have been excluded in order that these two on wrecker intellectuals should be printed. They are of prime importance, especially in view of the excitement which was caused not so very long ago by the trial and sentence of some British subjects on a similar wrecking charge.

From the point of view of individuals—the point of view dealt with in the first of these three essays—the whole question of honesty and opportunism is involved. It is especially noteworthy, particularly in the case of Ramzin, how the man rather through lack of powerful motive than through possession of any kind of social ideal, steadily slipped down into the degradation which brought him to trial. A. B.]

## MR BERTRAND RUSSELL'S SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY TO RUSSIA

October 24th, 1920

MANY of our visitors have given an account in articles and books of their impressions of the trip to the wild land of Muscovy. As one might expect, the British delegates of the Left busy themselves declaring their deep sympathy for our struggle and work, but the Rights by their reports are giving help to international counter-revolution in its struggle against us. We did not expect anything else.

When Mr Tom Shaw, a famous English opportunist with the looks of an innocent child, inquired of the representatives of the Soviet power how they supposed that a man of such distinguished lineage as the Right Honourable Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, a grandson of the Seventh Duke of Marlborough, the son of Lord Randolph Churchill, could lie, it was clear to everybody that that common-born toady of the British bourgeoisie, Mr Tom Shaw, would talk about Soviet Russia exactly as might suit the English bourgeoisie. So we were not in the least surprised when, at the Congress of the Second International Mr Shaw thundered against the Soviet Government, which, he says, oppresses the workers.

If the secretary of the delegation, Doctor Guest, did write in that yellowest of international rags, *The Times*, a series of 'exposures' of Soviet Russia, Doctor Guest was merely showing the British proletariat that he would do what we anticipated he would when we authorized his coming to Russia—namely, act as investigator for the British Government. In order to get some honest workers' representatives into Russia we had to let in such people, some of whom have since shown themselves for what they are. Their

exposures are not dangerous at all to Soviet Russia, because every honest British worker who can see every day how *The Times* and all the Northcliffe Press struggles unscrupulously against the British proletariat, knows the value of Doctor Guest's reports.

Whereas Madam Ethel Snowden, formerly a pretty pacifist and a representative of the British women workers' movement, thought she was going to captivate us with her fascinating gestures it need not surprise anyone that not for one moment did we suppose that this goosey middle-class lady would be able to comprehend the revolution of the Russian proletariat. Being folk who know how to be polite to the ladies, we pretended we believed the sincerity of her rapture when she was watching a military parade, and told us that she approved militarism of that kind, in defence of the worker's state. But as comrade Guilbeaux has already noted in his article in the foreign bulletin of the Communist International, we knew the austere revolution of the proletariat was not an affair for the delicate nerves of Madam Snowden. We knew that on her return to England she would cry on Mr Philip Snowden's breast, who would say 'Why did you go to that barbaric land? Haven't I told you that it is not a country for English ladies to travel in? You had better go for a rest to Belgium or northern France and have a look at the war ruins.'

There is no need to write about the articles, books and speeches of these Shaws, Guests, and Snowdens. But it is worth while to pay some attention to two articles written by Bertrand Russell in the leading weekly of the English liberals, *The Nation*. Bertrand Russell is an outstanding philosopher and mathematician, and a most honest man. For his pacifism he suffered in an English prison. What he writes has no money aim. His article is valuable, for it reveals the narrowness of even the best representatives of the capitalist classes, their inability to manage the problems that history is now putting before mankind.

Describing Soviet Russia, Mr. Russell acknowledges that the Government offered no hindrance to his and his associates' making an objective study of the situation. What then did he see? He speaks very favourably of the communists. He says that they spare neither themselves nor others, that they work sixteen hours a day and forget all about holidays; that in spite of their power they live modestly, do not pursue any personal aims, and struggle only for the creation of a new life. And he arrives at the conclusion that the Russian communists are very much like the English Puritans of the time of Cromwell. But he says:

'Life in modern Russia, as in Puritan England, is in many ways contrary to instinct. And if the Bolsheviks ultimately fail, it will be for the reasons for which the Puritans fell: because there comes a point at which men feel that amusement and ease are worth all other goods put together.' (*The Nation*, July 10th, 1920, p. 461.)

Mr Russell is undoubtedly an 'altruist'; he has proved it by his life. But Mr Russell has not given up his comfortable house, his quiet scholar's study, his week-end trips, his evenings at the theatre, or any of the things that a man who can get thousands of pounds a year from even a crippled capitalist world is able to afford.

And therefore it is not at all astonishing if he thinks that a revolution in which a telephone, a piece of white bread, a tin of condensed milk, or—how horrible—an automobile, are luxuries, is not a good revolution. Mr Bertrand Russell was able to stand such a revolution only two weeks, even under the conditions prevailing in the 'Dyelovoi Dvor,' with all manner of special conveniences at his disposal. And that is why Mr Bertrand Russell does not ask himself what 'joy of life' Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and Wrangel would have given the Russian workers, if with the aid they obtained from British imperialism they had won.

Mr Russell looks on the communists as a young, strong,

vital aristocracy in the new Russia. And he says that in many respects Soviet Russia reminds him of Plato's ideal commonwealth. As Plato's name has so far not been looked at askance we can but thank Russell for this. But what really lies at the basis of Russell's opinion about the situation in Russia he expresses in the following way:

'When a Russian communist speaks of dictatorship he means the word literally, but when he speaks of the proletariat, he means the word in a Pickwickian sense. He means the "class-conscious" part of the proletariat; i.e., the Communist Party. He includes people by no means proletarian (such as Lenin and Tchitcherin) who have the right opinions, and he excludes such wage-earners as have not the right opinions, whom he classifies as lackeys of the *bourgeoisie*.' *The Nation*, July 10th, 1920, p. 461.

What horrible things Bertrand Russell did see in the Soviet Union! Now in order to help him to understand them let us remind him of certain class relationships that he is not unacquainted with in England. Mr Russell himself comes of a highly aristocratic family. He belongs to the bourgeois class. But when during the world war, as a pacifist, he did not act in the interests of the English bourgeoisie, the English bourgeoisie deemed his views incorrect, considered him to be no longer a member of their class, but an enemy, and put him in prison. At that same time they raised the common worker Mr Henderson to the post of minister—because he did stand up for their interests.

Or take the still clearer case of Ernest Jones, one of the leaders of the Chartist movement in England. He was of aristocratic origin. His godfather was the Hanoverian king, who took care of his education. Jones was brought up at the English court. But when he took part in the revolutionary movement of the English workers in 1846 he was thrown into gaol, and for two years lived under conditions which killed some of his colleagues in suffering.



And so we see that this unheard-of phenomenon which Mr Russell observed in Russia—that there they consider as a champion of the proletariat a person who fights for the interests of the proletariat—a phenomenon which Russell cannot understand—is characteristic of all struggling classes. They consider as theirs only those who fight on their side for their class, and not merely those who just happen to be *born* in that class.

Mr Russell declares that he is an opponent of communism for the same reason that he is a pacifist. Civil war like any war brings appalling distress, and its utility is very problematic. In the struggle, he says, civilization is destroyed—observe how much Mr Russell really prizes the civilization which produced the four-year imperialist war!

In order to conquer it is necessary to establish a powerful authority, and any powerful authority leads to abuses. Mr Russell has before him two attempts to establish a powerful authority. He has before him the British government and the other allied capitalist states which plunged the world into unprecedented international butchery and now that is over are continuing the ruin. Mr Russell has little liking for Lloyd George and still less for Winston Churchill. He has also before him the authority of Soviet Russia making intense efforts to lead the masses out of the distress created by capitalism, an authority making heroic efforts to establish new foundations for human life. But for struggle against the whole capitalist world this authority could never limit itself to guerilla warfare. It had to form the Red Army, to create a huge provisioning apparatus, to centralize all its economic life. But Mr Russell says this too is bad—it creates special privileges, the commissars despite all their modesty have motor-cars, telephones, and theatre tickets—is this equality and freedom?

But what is Mr Russell to do as between these two evil governments strengthening their respective authorities?

When he gets back from his sentimental journey, now what does he do? After taking a bath he flings himself into an arm-chair by the fireside—how delightful English open fire-places are! And though he's not a commissar, he does not have to suffer from lack of coal, even if the poor in the East End of London are freezing. And Mr Russell, having put on his slippers and donned his dressing-gown, reads in the papers about the agony of Europe which has gone on even during his absence. About this even Mr Gibbs writes openly in Lloyd George's *Daily Chronicle*. And into Mr Russell's heart creep feelings of discontent, for how can an intelligent nice rich man enjoy himself when he knows how others are suffering. Mr Russell wrote in the *Nation*:

“But while I cannot advocate world revolution, I cannot escape from the conclusion that the Government of the leading capitalist countries are doing everything to bring it about. *The Nation*, July 10th, 1920, p. 462.

What wicked capitalist governments! What a nice man Mr Bertrand Russell is! If he goes on like that he will probably be getting locked up again. We can only express our hope that his excellent family connections will help to make his lot not too severe. We wish him the best of luck, for after all what on earth is the use of his senseless sacrifices?

When he was in Moscow Bertrand Russell stated that he would rather go to gaol than deny himself a joke. It seems to us that his philosophy, his pacifism and his socialism are all ways in which this sensitive plant of the English bourgeoisie jokes about the brutal forms of the policy of his class and its brutal plunder. Let them arrange it all ‘better,’ ‘with more delicacy’—or more cunning—so that when Mr Russell enjoys the privileges of his position he need not feel the pangs of conscience, for they are so unpleasant, these pangs!

It is not a very good look-out for the capitalist world facing the stupendous catastrophe of a whole epoch of history, if it

cannot produce a better philosophy than that of Mr Russell, who reminds us of Æsop's fable about an exceedingly unphilosophic character—namely, the ass—which, placed midway between a trough of hay and a trough of oats, died of starvation philosophizing which was the better. We offer Mr Russell our apologies for comparing him with such an unphilosophical creature, and we also present our apologies to that grey-coated toiler for comparing it with such a parasitic creature as a middle-class 'philosopher.'

# A WRECKER

## LEONID KONSTANTINOVITCH RAMZIN

December, 1930

LEONID KONSTANTINOVITCH RAMZIN occupies first place among the accused members of the Central Committee of the so-called 'Industrial Party.' Leonid Konstantinovitch Ramzin pretends to be their leader, their theorist. With the modesty of the great he speaks of himself as a man not of words, but of deeds. He considers it natural that the wreckers aimed at obtaining his support. In short, Ramzin knows his place in the history of mankind.

This appraisal of his own role in history, as is only fitting, even has some theoretical foundation. Just as Plato pictured his ideal state as one of Greek slave-owners led by philosophers, because by profession he was a philosopher and not an engineer of industrial heating, Leonid Konstantinovitch Ramzin, being an engineer, was convinced that the government of the slave-owning Russia he wished to create would be in the hands of engineers. Why, this fellow Ramzin is a real Ramses—Ramses I, founder of a whole dynasty.

The Egyptian Pharaohs were considered to be gods, and in order that people might view them as such they neither ate food nor eased nature in the presence of simple mortals. Similarly Leonid Konstantinovitch Ramzin, expatiating on his political aims, on the profound forces which made him change from Bolshevism to Menshevism, from hatred of the Soviet power to 'honest service' of the Soviet power, and from this 'honest' service to really honest service in the French Secret Service, is quite above touching on certain petty if somewhat vital matters of everyday life. For instance, he does not mention what really did become of those millions

of roubles which the leaders of the 'Industrial Party' received from 'Torgprom' or from the French Secret Service. They say they distributed them among the various branches of industry, much as they did the half per cent fees (otherwise known as bribes) received from foreign manufacturers as commission on machinery and raw material sold by the said foreign manufacturers to the Soviet Union. 'Distributed' is well said. It is even gratifying to see the victory of the collective idea among our engineers. But what was this money used for? Was it to establish a secret centre of conspiracy, a secret printing plant, a network of communications?

We have heard nothing of all this. Perhaps these millions were spent on wining and dining, on silk stockings for the ladies, and for other prosaic purposes, expenses of that nature which do not disappear merely because our gentlemen engineers head a struggle of 'liberation' for the Russian bourgeoisie. 'Liberators' also eat and drink. They even do it—as the trial revealed—rather well, not that this kept them from wanting still more. But if we now come down from the heights of Ramzin's 'style' and try in a more prosaic and detailed manner to get at the biography of this hero of 'our' bourgeoisie, we believe the resulting portrait, though perhaps not quite so heroic, will be so much closer to reality, so much more familiar.

L. K. Ramzin was a teacher's son. He brought his old grandfather into it, because his grandfather was a peasant; apparently he wants to establish 'a proletarian-peasant origin,' because that is what is 'done' nowadays. But I think that this grandfather is a trifle more significant here. The well-to-do peasantry produce kulak types not only on their farms, by exploitation of hired labour and the poor generally, and by money-lending and trade—they quite often produce a special kind of kulak—of the scientific world, by sending their sons to school. The characteristic feature of these offspring of the peasantry is their careerism. Ramzin's

father stayed down on the first rung of the ladder; he was a village teacher. His son went further, to a technical college; and when we examine the man's life closely we see what a great part the desire to climb played in the marvellous things he has accomplished.

But before starting on this career of his, young Ramzin paid his tribute to his time. He was only eighteen in 1905 when Moscow was struggling on the barricades, but all the same he found his way into a Bolshevik student circle, and in 1907 even went so far as to do a few small routine tasks for the Moscow Committee. Later when Ramzin was 'honestly' working for the Soviet power, when with a group of Bolsheviks, he was fond of referring to those days, as if to say, 'We too did our bit towards building Soviet power, though later on our scientific studies took us away from revolutionary work.' Now, with all due respect to science, let us say plainly that it was the raging reaction of those days took our Mr Ramzin away from revolutionary activity. The Moscow Committee with which Mr Ramzin says he worked, found itself in Butyrki Prison, whereas Mr Ramzin happened to take his vacation. When he came back he does not seem to have made any effort to get into touch with his committee.

Those were savage days. The creaking of Stolypin's gallows could be heard, and Mr Ramzin concluded it would be better to live for capitalism than to die for socialism. Even Achilles when in Hades declared that it was better to be a live dog than a dead hero. Ramzin went quietly, quite quietly on with his studies and when the war broke out had just received a first prize and had been appointed to a post-graduate studentship. That secured him exemption from military service. Together with his teacher, Professor Kirsch, and other young scientists, he began to prepare others to serve the fatherland by work on the manufacture of high-explosive shells and shrapnel. His valuable life was thus preserved for further noble deeds.

What Mr L. K. Ramzin thought about a war which was destroying Russian peasants and workers by hundreds and hundreds of thousands, a war which had shattered the whole world, he has not told us. Considering the company he was in in 1917, it is quite clear that his lack of interest in politics due to his profound absorption in science did not prevent him from doing 'his duty' to 'tsar and country' and with blinking one eye do his bit to sacrifice the lives of millions of other people. It was all as it should be, all quite proper. All that profound absorption in science in those who had dropped out of the revolutionary movement was a necessary part of their lower middle-class existence, cringing step by step nearer to the bourgeoisie, with of course the complete extirpation of every single revolutionary idea or idealet that may have remained in some back corner of the heads of these 'revolutionists' who had served the revolution for a whole blue moon.

Thus it is not in the least surprising that the February revolution should find Mr Ramzin in a camp hostile to the Bolsheviks, those Bolsheviks who did not only want to snatch peasant and worker out of the hell of war, but had gone quite crazy and proposed to start on socialism 'immediately.' Professor Ramzin could not possibly approve of such unheard-of things. But at the very moment when the Bolsheviks were fighting the bourgeois forces on the streets of Moscow he expressed his disapproval. He was employed by the Moscow authorities at the time and thus was an ex-officio member of the city council. When the fighting began he went to the town hall and there he remained throughout the shooting. His proud declaration is that he considered it dishonourable to leave at such a moment. He neither took a rifle for one side or the other, nor even carried one single message. He just sat on in the council building. That is to say, he expressed his stern political convictions by a steady pressure on the rear portion of his anatomy.

Professor Ramzin always likes to embroider a little. That is in keeping with the high position of Premier which he 'almost' obtained. Laritchev, who is more modest, would simply have said, 'I got caught in the town hall like the pig in the swill-tub and was afraid to crawl out because there was shooting going on, and I was afraid to take a rifle into my own hands because it might have gone off.' But the Bolsheviks were not frightened by Professor Ramzin's disapproval and Professor Ramzin soon had to take up some position with regard to the Soviet Government.

During the civil war Professor Ramzin, who was a supporter of 'democracy' with all its attributes, and an opponent of the socialist revolution, did not take any direct part in the struggle with the Soviet Government. Ramzin has not even tried to give us the reason for the platonic nature of his attachment to his political views, probably because it is difficult to boast that at a time when the destinies of your country were being decided you were only an irritated middle-class householder. He hid himself in organizations doing what is called 'social work,' i.e., worked for his living, but the service of the Soviet Government he would not enter. That might have proved dangerous, because he of course did not believe in the permanence of the Soviet Government.

But at last the Soviet Government finally destroyed the white armies and on the basis of the New Economic Policy began the re-establishment of economic life. Professor Ramzin joined in the work of the Central Heating Board and in that of the State Planning Commission. He says that on entering the job he made some sort of observation to Comrade Krzhizhanovsky about his 'non-acceptance' of war communism. It is only not clear whether he did not make that observation *after* war communism had already been done away with. However that may be, in the State Planning Commission Ramzin did not behave like many of the specialists, who maintained a distance between themselves and the



Soviet Government and emphasized that they were working on concrete economic problems, did not believe in socialism, and would not take any part in building it. Ramzin displayed a great power of 'insinuativeness' to use an expression which the late Bogdanov used.

We only need to look through Ramzin's articles and reports, in which with considerable show of sob-stuff he speaks of socialist construction and very frequently contrasts socialism in growth with capitalism in decay. There is not a word that could be said against Professor Ramzin's personal relations at this time. He was a good comrade, good company too, one of those open-hearted fellows, and we, being simpletons, used to forget his past completely. When people from the State Planning Commission were introducing Ramzin to other communists outside the circle of economic experts, they would invariably say 'He was a member of the party during the first revolution.'

In the beginning of 1927 Ramzin got into touch with those evil genii of Russian engineers, the faithful servants of capital, Palchinski and Rabinovitch. Prosecutor Krylenko and the President of the court, Vyshinski, tried in every way by cross-examination to find out how it happened. They first questioned Ramzin as to his attitude to the Soviet Government when he first began to work for it. At first, his answer was that he began work without any ulterior motive, worked honestly and was devoted to the Soviets. But later, when it was suddenly disclosed that he, a Bolshevik in 1907, was hostile at the time of the October Revolution and sabotaged the Soviet Government, Professor Ramzin suddenly recalled that he had taken the New Economic Policy to be the way back to capitalism, that he served the Soviet Government honestly, hoping that without his assistance it would change its spots. Why then did Professor Ramzin join the wreckers in the autumn of 1926?

He does give one motive correctly, though of course touched

up a trifle. He says that the leaders of the engineers, i.e., the Palchinskies and the Rabinovitches, looked on him as a Bolshevik (i.e., were deceived just as many Bolsheviks were) were always at his heels, never trusted him in their joint work. But he needed the assistance of trained men for the development of the Heat and Power Engineering Institute. Therefore he made advances to them. Mr Ramzin has proudly declared that they also made advances to him. What was the nature of Palchinski's and Rabinovitch's political advances he has not told us, though he emphasized, very irritably too, that they had need of him. But clearly those steps were of such a character as to persuade Mr Ramzin to submit to the pressure of the Palchinskies and hold out his hand to them. Nor did they spurn it. They said 'All right, now prove whether or not you come to us sincerely,' and forthwith put him a question point-blank concerning his participation in their sabotage organization. And there was our hero caught just like an 'innocent' miss who is quite clear things are to go no farther than 'innocent' flirtation, and then finds she is going to have a baby.

He probably thought that Palchinski would be satisfied with a little counter-revolutionary chit-chat over the tea-table. But Palchinski had got him.

He told him about the counter-revolutionary organization and proposed he should join its centre group, banking on Ramzin being afraid to tell the Soviet authorities, and also being afraid that if he did not take part in the wreckers' work, and they failed, their failure would be put down to his treachery. Now he was in it he might as well swing for a sheep as a lamb, because if it fell through they would be bound to revenge themselves by claiming him as one of themselves. What was more he might escape, and then participation in counter-revolutionary work might prove very useful some day. And so we come to the second motive which Mr Ramzin does not mention, namely, that reinsurance of which the other

defendants have spoken. There is a novel by one Roizman called *Minus Six*, which tells the fate of a certain Jewish merchant living under the Soviets. During the war communism period, in order to protect himself from justice, he found work in a co-operative store as a salesman. When the whites were approaching Moscow, he contrived to get the rubber stamp of the local trade union committee on a document that he had typed himself. This document denounced him as 'a leader of counter-revolutionary propaganda' among his fellow-workers. He preserved this document as one of great value, reckoning that if Denikin entered Moscow and a Jewish pogrom started he could produce this certificate bearing a Bolshevik stamp, which would exculpate his service under the Bolsheviks by his counter-revolutionary propaganda. Many of the 'specialists' who have 'worked for' the Soviets have gone in for this kind of insurance—just sufficient counter-revolutionary talk to guard against being hung some day by the whites for serving the Bolsheviks. Of this motive our hero says not a word.

Yet this motive doubtless played a great role in his case. Quite possibly when Mr Ramzin started his conversations with Palchinski he thought the matter would end in talk, which later would serve him as a recommendation. But the break with England occurred, and the atmosphere suddenly grew heavy with menace of intervention. Then Mr Ramzin consulted his scientific conscience and reached the conclusion that the Soviet Government was leading the country to catastrophe, and that it was up to him to save it by working for a crisis, for economic catastrophe!

The change of attitude of a considerable number of the middle-class 'specialists' in 1928 was undoubtedly provoked by the acuteness of the class struggle resulting from the socialist offensive. Their miserable little minds could not conceive of development taking place except along capitalist lines, and were convinced of the inevitability of a crash of the

Soviet government. A first-class example of this kind of traitor was Professor Osadchi, who in 1928 deserted his high position as vice-president of the State Planning Commission for the camp of the counter-revolutionary conspirators. But in 1926 and in the beginning of 1927 Ramzin did not have this motive. When he says he had, that is only invention, Mr Ramzin striving to hide the fact that even Pharaohs eat and the Ramzins are cowards. Things smelled of intervention, and Mr Ramzin decided to stake all. Moreover he was being pushed from behind by a strong man like Palchinski, an old fighter for counter-revolution, a born counter-revolutionary, not a miserable piece of work like Ramzin.

Palchinski knew what he was doing when he sent Ramzin to negotiate with the 'Trade Industrial Party' about intervention. He had forced Ramzin to burn his boats behind him. In these negotiations democrat Ramzin, patriot Ramzin, zealous citizen of his 'fatherland,' 'perishing under the yoke of Bolshevism,' came out in his true colours. He was told by the Denisovs, by the Konovalovs, by the Tretiakovs that they were in negotiation with Poincaré and the French General Staff about intervention. Little inexperienced Ramzin was only forty. Even if he did not notice such trifles in actual life from his scientific thermo-technical heights, he had once read Marxist pamphlets and heard of the existence of classes. He probably had even heard of imperialism; that wars were made for new territory, for oil, for coal, for iron. He probably knew that wars cost many millions. But he did not even inquire what the French 'liberators' would want as a token of 'gratitude' for their work.

About his 'meeting by night' he said, 'I sat next to Denisov. It was a dinner given by the heads of the "Trade Industrial Party" to their lieutenants.' In between the oysters and the lobster soup Professor Ramzin had some more *pourparlers* with Denisov who would keep on about intervention. But in his effort to hide this delightful combination

of business and pleasure—for Pharaohs neither eat nor fulfil other terminal functions—he draws a veil over what was actually said. Now Denisov could hardly speak in vague general terms about intervention for a whole evening. Either Professor Ramzin is suppressing what Denisov actually told him about the terms of intervention, or he was so ‘polite’ as not to ask about such unpleasant details. Anyway, we can say it was a Russian patriot, a man of science, not some obscure little shopwalker or butcher from a back street, who went to Paris to sell his ‘fatherland’ by the pound and by the yard.

In court he even waxed ironical about Fedotov who called a bribe a bribe, but who was ashamed to acknowledge that he had traded his own country. ‘Why, were we little children, not to know how we should have to pay for the help of foreign bayonets?’ cried Professor Ramzin. Yes, you knew, Professor Ramzin. We have no doubt about that. But even if this idealistic leader had dared once to acknowledge that he knew that he was trafficking the body of his own country, when he looked into the eyes of the thousands of workers scrutinizing the heroic features of the bourgeoisie in the Hall of Columns, he quailed, and despite the pressure of the prosecutor and the chairman of the court he could not squeeze a word of confession out of himself, could not bring himself to acknowledge that he was preparing for mass executions of hundreds of thousands, if not of millions of workers, had intervention succeeded and military dictatorship come—a ‘provisional dictatorship’ as in extenuation of his own infamy he so nicely called it. The words stuck in his throat. But nobody in the world can be so naive as to doubt for a moment that, in order to reestablish the power of the landlords and capitalists, Professor Ramzin would have sacrificed not only the future of the country, not only all the people who would have perished in struggle against intervention, but the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, who if counter-revolution had won would have paid with their lives for having been the first in

the world to dare to build a world without capitalists and landlords.

And this Ramzin, having raised himself from being a great specialist in thermo-technics to being a candidate for the premiership, even considered, so he tells us, that power should have come to him on the basis, so to speak, of a law of history. Does not industry play a leading role in the modern world? Who, then, if not the high priests of applied science should run the world? The Russian workers aimed at jumping from backward Russia to a new era of socialism. Professor Ramzin was more modest—he merely wished to enter upon a new stage of capitalism, State capitalism, with engineers and company for priests. But dreaming is always permissible. Dream of power is a sweet dream. But we may tell Mr. Ramzin confidentially that it was all just showing off before schoolgirls. Dreams become possible when they are dreamt by great creators. Professor Ramzin is a great expert, but he is not a creative man. He is not a man intoxicated by his work, but only a very talented careerist. The Soviet government provided his science with a field he would never have found in any other country. He was only thirty-three when he was placed at the head of the enormous enterprises. What happened? For a time he burned with enthusiasm, then the fires burned smoky and went out and Ramzin joined the wreckers, that is, he set out to destroy not merely social and economic, but also technical progress. This contradiction Ramzin is unable to explain, however much he wriggles. A great *creative* engineer could never become a wrecker. What prospects were there for Ramzin in wrecking? He has said that only children could fail to understand the value of intervention. And here he was caught in his own toils. The value of intervention in the long run was to be that of the conversion of Russia into a semi-colony. In colonial countries imperialism does not allow the development of heavy industry, indeed it hinders it as far as possible because this is the basis of

technical progress. It allows assembly plants and light industry. If it gave power to the Russian bourgeoisie, would rapacious world imperialism assist an industrial development which would compete with its own? Would a country paying tsarist debts, and the cost of intervention too, have found means itself for great technical progress? No, Russia would have been an agricultural hinterland for the imperialist countries and would have paid reparations to world capitalism which would have meant handing over for nothing a considerable part of our raw materials—with which to-day we buy machinery. You, Professor Ramzin, know this as well as your friends knew it. And when you reach out your hand to take the crown and sceptre of a technical king, you are really pitiful and ridiculous. You were only an engineer of wrecking and an engineer of intervention. You found yourself instead a candidate for the job of public executioner, you wanted to get the Russian masses into the noose. It was just because you so highly estimated your position that you were able to stoop to being a common agent of the French Secret Service. All governments use espionage, but ministers, you know, do not ordinarily deal with common spies, still less do premiers. They leave that dirty work to their inferiors in the secret service. But the candidate for the position of Prime Minister of the Russian Technical Intelligentsia, being secretly properly aware of his own worth, did not shrink from the dirtiest work. He used to repeat mechanically to himself like the parrot as pussy dragged it away tail first, 'If I must, come on, Pretty Poll, pull away.'

Ramzin is a pitiful figure. This is not an individual matter. The fact is that the Russian bourgeoisie always has been bloodthirsty and greedy for profit, but even so astonishingly poor in morals or ideas. It did not fight for the capitalist order against feudalism as the bourgeoisie in the Western countries did. It was born under the protective loving wing of tsarism, and when the aristocracy kicked it, it bought them

off with bribes. And when the fateful hour of Russian capitalism struck, it was the landowning class who fought in the front line, who sacrificed their blood. It was they who commanded the white armies. The town capitalists, the pure bourgeoisie, busied themselves with buying up valuta wherewith to flee the country. And the hangers-on of that bourgeoisie, its petty tools, were as miserable as their bosses. Ramzin, puffing himself up into theoretical leader of the engineer class had not a single real idea in his head. That is why he has ended as he has.

It would be quite wrong, however, to think that the miserable character of this 'hero of the Industrial Party' means that the wreckers have played an insignificant part. Their part is determined by two factors. Behind the remnants of the Russian bourgeoisie stand influential groups of world imperialism, which is already too weak to assure continuance of capitalism, but still sufficiently strong to flood whole continents with blood. The Ramzins are pitiful as far as ideas, or morality, or their relationship to the masses goes. But having received a fine technical education at the peoples' expense, they have utilized their temporary superiority over us, while we ourselves were still preparing our own men, to try to get us in a muddle, and, if intervention had come off to stick us in the back. They were not strong enough to struggle with us face to face. They could strike at us only by hiding in our institutions, and, like the reptiles they are, striking from behind. That is why, in spite of all their efforts, their behaviour in court is that of crushed and squirming creatures of a lower order.



## THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

ON the stage in the Hall of Columns stood an old man. He was half blind and the bright lights seemed to him like the fiery eyes of millions who wanted to penetrate his secrets. Suddenly he felt that he was naked. He tried to cover his flabby old body with his hands, and found the scars of old ulcers which he had hidden even from his nearest and dearest. Unendurable shame clutched his throat. He tried to explain something in a whisper, but the loud-speakers bellowed out even the rattle and the shaking in his breast.

An old man, and his speech was incoherent, and in spite of the detestable ulcers of his soul he excited pity. Even the State prosecutor on whose shoulders the republic and the proletariat had placed the heavy duty of knowing no mercy, seemed reluctant to hold the probe with which he had to investigate those old wounds. But he was obliged, like a doctor, to be firm. He was obliged to probe deeply into the living body. He forced his voice to be calm and strong and questioned unmercifully. But when in his speech of indictment he gave a general picture of the sorry heroes of this Russian counter-revolution, and characterized old Fedotov as a wrecker, a counter-revolutionist, an agent of intervention, an assistant of the spies, he did also find words to express the feeling of pity which this member of the Central Committee of the 'Industrial Party' aroused in him.

The prison doors have closed behind A. A. Fedotov, and taking into consideration his age, he probably will never make full amends for his great sin against the toiling masses—it is generally impossible to make amends—or even to minimize that sin. If we return to this figure of the politically dead, it is not to stir the pity of readers or out of morbidity. In all his individual qualities Fedotov is peculiarly exemplary of

a whole stratum of the technical intelligentsia, a type we can use to help us understand something of the social medium which has supplied the defendants in this trial of leaders of the counter-revolutionary organization. Their kind still live and probably will live until the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan and further great victories of the Soviet and world proletariat finally dig the ground from under the feet of the capitalist elements in the U.S.S.R., and convince the 'last of the Mohicans' of Russian capitalism that the cause of the bourgeoisie in the U.S.S.R. is completely lost. We probably shall have to deal with these people for years, until the new generation of our own Red engineers grows up, and can take over the immense constructive problems the Soviet proletariat has to solve. It is this circumstance, the indispensability of giving careful attention to these middle-class engineers and applied scientists, that makes it our duty to make a most careful study of the lessons of the trial of the engineer counter-revolutionists.

Fedotov, like most of the defendants, sprang from the unpropertied masses. Like the majority of the defendants, he is neither capitalist nor landowner by origin. In spite of that, there he was among those toadies of capitalism who risk their necks for the sake of re-establishing the domination of their former bosses. A large majority of the scientific experts and engineers are probably of such origin. They are the children of office clerks, of small officials, of teachers, of well-to-do peasants, of handicraftsmen, sent to school by their parents to 'get on in the world.' But as under the capitalist order a worker or a peasant was hardly considered an individual at all, 'getting on' meant entering the service of the capitalists.

The bosses themselves were usually people no man the least bit cultured or ethically sensitive could put up with. But people who were elbowing their way out of the poverty in which the families of office clerks and teachers used to live

hadn't much thought for ethics or culture. The one thought of the Sitnins and Kupriyanovs was how, by faithful service of their masters, to climb the social ladder and increase their incomes. More sensitive types like Fedotov lived, so to speak, on two floors. On one they zealously and faithfully worked for their bosses, frantic knight-errants of profit. On this floor they humiliated themselves and flattered fulsomely, because to do otherwise was impossible. There they learned the customs of the bourgeoisie. Their employers made millions by selling supplies to the army, by speculation, and by merciless exploitation of their workers. The Fedotovs never dreamed of the governing power of the world some day being in the hands of engineers like Ramzin, puffed out in his peacock glory. Power over the world they left to the Riabushinskis and the Morozovs. All they asked for themselves was so much commission, or—to call the spade a spade—bribery. 'You take the world; only give us a quarter or a half per cent. on the deal.'

The whole of the old engineering world considered this bribery their inborn right. One of the defendants at the trial remarked that bribery had become more widespread since the war. Bribery there always was, but it is a striking characteristic of the morality of this engineering world that they considered the bribe their legitimate right. The great majority of them were satisfied with salary increments and proper 'commission.' Just a few of them had the second floor, where they could shelter from the wild struggle for better cribs and fatter bribes.

When he came home and took off his uniform, that kind of engineer would read liberal dailies and heavy quarterlies, and some took up fiction and music. Fedotov used to play very well. The best of them even had social or scientific interests beyond the limits of their actual trade. Fedotov was interested in what is called 'social work' among the working class. As an educated man he understood that press-gang methods, foul food and factory barracks in place of dwelling-houses

were far from being the best means of raising the productivity of labour. And people like Fedotov painted a flattering picture for themselves of their work for capitalism—picturing it as patriotic service, increasing the country's productive forces—without which it would be 'impossible' to improve social conditions.

Old Fedotov maintained courteous relations with the workers, whom he helped the Morozovs to exploit. He made a study of foreign legislation for the protection of labour, and even got as far as Australia. Indeed the farther away the country was in which labour was 'protected,' the stronger beat the hearts of these liberal professors and their liberal readers. And Fedotov not only read about those countries in which the labour of a worker is protected, but even wrote about them in the daily *Russkie Vyedomosti*, that rag of the most cowardly form of Russian liberalism, read by wide circles of the Russian intelligentsia exactly because of its foreign news. Indeed a whole generation of Russian Social-Democrats got their first information about the activities of German Social-Democracy from the Berlin correspondence of Yollo in the *Vyedomosti*.

Fedotov even paid a public tribute to his love of the workers by taking part in the funeral of those murdered by Cossacks in one of the demonstrations of 1905. When comrade Krylenko ironically referred to this greatest 'act' of the liberal professor, Fedotov hotly referred to a memorial album the workers had presented to him, and also the fact that twelve years later, when the thunder-clap of the proletarian revolution broke and the fetters fell from them, the workers had elected him to their factory management. But this, of course, merely shows that the workers had seen so little evidence of good will on the part of the 'scientist' servants of capitalism, that they gratefully remembered for years after the very smallest sympathy extended them.

But what could Fedotov see from the heights of this second

floor of his of culture, and learning and liberal humanitarianism?

He insists that when in October the world of the bourgeoisie was shattered to pieces he understood the historic necessity of the phenomenon. He even told us that that liberal rag, *Russkie Vyedomosti*, understood it too, but when furnished with bound volumes of his favourite reading he was unable to point to a single article that might bear out his claim. Let us help him. In 1917 there really were such articles in the cadet (Liberal Party) Press—but in rather a different sense from what Fedotov wished to suggest. The cadet papers were full of warnings that, if a strong government were not organized, *and preferably a military dictatorship*, the victory of Bolshevism was inevitable. But of course they understood this inevitability, not as a high stage to which humanity might rise, but as a kind of historical Nemesis, as a revenge of history for the rottenness of the Russian bourgeoisie. In this sense even Alexander II might be said to have understood the necessity of the Bolshevik conquest, even though at that time nobody knew the word ‘bolshevik.’

All his knowledge was no help to Fedotov when the proletarian revolution came with sword in hand. Maybe it was his natural tenderness and love of workers that helped him to find common ground with the workers who, remembering his past, promoted him to the management of the Orekhovo-Zuyevo Trust. Thus he was able to get through the first storm. But what he actually thought and felt then (properly speaking he felt more than he thought) he himself told the court, and this story is far and away the most instructive part of his confession, and the most winning in its sincerity.

Replying to a question of the State prosecutor as to his attitude to the offensive of the whites in 1919, Fedotov revealed to us the inmost heart of the majority of our scientific and other experts of the petty middle class. When Denikin

was near Orel, Fedotov says he did not rejoice because he knew that the whites were carrying death to hundreds of thousands, and enormous suffering to millions. Yet if the Reds had lost he would not have retreated from Moscow with them. He would have stayed in Moscow and welcomed the whites!

And this admission of A. A. Fedotov's is most valuable. Politically it is an admission of immense importance. It gives a clue whereby to understand the position of the majority of the capitalist intelligentsia. It must be called capitalist because it has grown up on the basis of the capitalist order, in collaboration with the capitalist class, as servant of that class. It believed that the capitalist order was the best of all possible orders, for did it not allow the sons of petty clerks and teachers and rich peasants to 'make their fortune,' to earn their thousands a year, to have their own little private flower-pot of culture, to decorate their snug retreats, and even in spare moments devote themselves to love of their fellow-men.

Fedotov probably saw what boors his bosses were, saw the hard life of the workers; but when a man is living comfortably himself he is inclined to be optimistic. And what does bourgeois social science exist for if not to supply the Fedotovs with such arguments as that only competition, and private profit can furnish the necessary stimuli for improving the world, that in the final score that capitalist order would raise the broad masses?

How deeply this notion which was true in the eighteenth century, but is quite false now, rooted in the hearts of these 'men of science'! A. A. Fedotov showed how deep in his speech before the court—perhaps his last public speech—when he mumbled rather helplessly that only now did he understand that there are other stimuli, social stimuli, collective stimuli, in human life.

But when the proletarian revolution shifted him out of his accustomed rut, took away the scores of thousands of roubles

he had saved, took away his estate, and made him afraid that any day now would find *him* working under a workers' class management—when it actually for a time put him in the hands of the Cheka (the now abolished political police), Fedotov did not struggle, he did not even try to escape to the whites, did not even sabotage. He obeyed orders, he tried to adapt himself, but when even from afar he heard the rifles of the white forces, when the roar of the counter-revolutionary guns was heard, A. A. Fedotov knew in the depth of his soul that he was going to stay where he was. Had the clatter of the hoofs of Shkuro's and Mamontov's cavalry resounded along the streets of Moscow he would have run out into the street and welcomed them with tears in his eyes to the tune of 'God Save the Tsar.' He would not have thought any more about the sea of blood they had left behind them. He would not have thought then of the returned landlords flogging the peasants in the villages. He would not be concerned just then with what was in store for the working-class quarters of Moscow. Life is cruel, he would think, civilization moves forward over the bodies of the slain. Darwin taught that in the struggle for existence the best-adapted survive. If people had to perish, this intellectual would say, let it be others. He wanted to live, and still in that old Russia with tsar and landowner—even if he did not love them so very much—still, he was better off. How pleasant it had been in the evenings to dip into *Russkie Vedomosti* and on the secluded second floor of the small house of his life discuss 'cultured topics' with Professor Manuilov and other professors. In the morning to set out for office or bank, in the evening to handle his wallet or his passbook and think that after all it was not so bad to live in Russia.

And here is the root of it all. Under capitalism they did live better; under capitalism they felt they were bosses themselves, or at least the most trusted men of the bosses. The best among them may have patronized the workers, but they

never considered them as equals. According to our liberals, were the workers to attempt to take power, nothing but a bloody and senseless Russian riot could ever come of it. Nowhere in the world was there any socialism; it was not for Russia to invent socialism. Let them start it in Australia. Professor Fedotov would probably have been only too glad to provide the facts for the readers of *Russkie Vyedomosti*. As a man of science he would have clambered to the very summit of objectivity and written of 'this Australian socialism' as, on the one hand, having bad features, and, on the other, good ones—just like some of these educated humanistic middle-class Americans who visit the U.S.S.R. But there would have been of course no reason to hasten with this 'experiment.' He would have been sure to have added that at the end.

An educated class which thinks that way is the *bouillon* in which wreckers and members of counter-revolutionary organizations are bred. Of course the majority of the intelligentsia who think so would never risk their lives for capitalism. They try to make themselves comfortable under the Bolsheviks, cherishing in their hearts the hope that the evil years will somehow pass, the bosses some day return, and the 'good old days' begin over again. The minority capable of action are of the most varied types. There is the careerist longing for a ministerial portfolio. There is the common adventurer out to grab a nice fat sum under pretence of 'distributing' it on counter-revolutionary organization. Then there is the misanthrope whose life is made a misery by the working class (the more cultured the workers become, the more they master knowledge and the apparatus of thought, the fiercer the fury of our 'scientific' experts).

There is also the coward who once he starts counter-revolutionary talk gets caught by the experts at catching men by their tongues, and sucked into their organization, and



then having been made a partner to their secrets, gets into such a tangle that he loses his head. And finally there are the Fedotovs who are flattered at the thought that they are 'raising the authority of engineers and the "educated classes" as a whole, protecting their living and pecuniary interest.' 'If one claw gets caught the whole bird is lost,' Fedotov said at the trial. He joined the wreckers. He was caught with them.

He fell step by step. First a secret organization ostensibly for increasing the authority of the engineers, then agreements concerning the positions to be occupied by the different groups of engineers working on current economic problems. These agreements step by step developed into a wrecking or sabotage plot.

From wrecking Fedotov went on to talk about intervention, persuading himself—so he says—that it was only talk. From talk about intervention he went on to getting into touch with the interventionists. And from that to actively helping them.

Of the ideological formulæ used by Fedotov probably the nearest to his heart would have been 'patriotism,' or 'defence of the fatherland,' but that he had to reject because the counter-revolutionaries knew they had no support within the country for conquest over the proletariat. And step by step, weakling, kind-hearted, liberal, social-worker Fedotov began one by one to cut from the map pieces of his fatherland with which to feed the beast of intervention. Mentally he began to grease the rope to make the noose slip slickly on the necks of his 'dearly beloved' workers. His heart was torn as he lay awake at night peering into the darkness ahead with his half-blinded eyes. Yet the Fedotovs had not the strength to get out of the pit they had dug under their own feet.

Thus he reached the court, and in the court-room one crime after another arose to testify against him. When peasants were beating to death a wolf they had caught, it used to be the custom to accompany each blow with an appro-

prate explanation: 'This for the cow'; 'this for the horse'; 'this for the lamb.' Any one of the crimes committed by A. A. Fedotov would have been quite sufficient to have him shot. As one after another crimes came to light which demanded the head of that old man, bribery suddenly came up, the most common form, not punishable under those sections of the criminal code which carry the death sentence. But bribery has begun to grow to symbolic dimensions. Helferich, one-time director of the Deutsche Bank and Vice-Chancellor of the German Empire, once told me that after the conclusion of a contract with the government of the former Sultan of Turkey for one of the sections of the Baghdad railway, the Sultan's Ministers came to him one after the other and quite openly demanded their baksheesh. The War Minister even cheerfully asked him why, when his lord the Sultan had concluded a profitable contract, should not his Ministers rejoice and accept presents on such a day of joy. Maybe Fedotov did not think quite so patriarchially. But when the bosses are doing big business why should their assistants not do at least a little business, he thought. And suddenly he saw himself standing before a hall full of people, good and bad alike, no doubt, in their personal lives, but not one of them bribe-takers, not one of whom but considered it a crime to profit at the expense of the people. And suddenly he felt the gulf dividing him from this coming new world, which not in words but in fact put social interests before personal ones. Though he showed the defendant considerable consideration, the State prosecutor, in a speech brilliant both forensically and politically, found it necessary to emphasize that it was just this point which caused A. A. Fedotov's downfall. That finding was one of great wisdom.

Now this final crash of A. A. Fedotov over a bribe is not a psychological problem but one of immense social significance. The wreckers fought for the re-establishment of capitalism. In the court-room was a portrait of Lenin. Over the benches

on which the defendants sat there should have been hung the portrait of Riabushinski, of whom Fedotov himself said that in helping to organize the white armies, who were to return to him his property and power, he sold them boots with cardboard soles. Over Lenin's portrait is our war-cry 'Workers of the world unite' (a cry for which millions have perished). Over Riabushinski's portrait, the symbol of capitalist Russia—there could have been this inscription 'Either I shall succeed in liberating holy Russia, or at least in cheating her of three millions.'

That is the Russia in the name of which A. A. Fedotov should have laid his hoary head on a block. He and his crowd are heroes of the struggle for the right to sell rotten boots. If the boss 'works for his pocket' to save his power, why should his tools not take bribes, either at the expense of the old masters, or at the expense of the new master, His Majesty the All-Union Proletariat—who, they considered, was to be a caliph but for a brief space. So, bribe in pocket, Forward march! To the block, ye intellectuals, to perish for counter-revolution and other fakes!

That is why the picture revealed by this trial is so disgusting. Not a mere onlooker still clogged with sentimentality and anxious to see even in his class enemy some human features, but the public prosecutor, who by his very calling is not given to any sentimentality, found himself searching the rows of the accused for at least one man from whom he need not turn his face in disgust, searched as one might for an oasis in the desert—and he could light upon the face of A. A. Fedotov as the only possible one, that Fedotov, even whose lifelong liberalism and love for 'social work and improvement' had not kept him from welcoming, in the secret depths of his heart, those ravaging hordes of the Russian land-owning class striving to bring back the lash to the peasantry, shackles again to the worker and for the whole country a foreign yoke. That was the only man the public prosecutor could find to

relieve the darkness, that creature Fedotov, all whose knowledge of economic and social evolution could not preserve him from dreaming of an eternal existence for capitalism.

Allegiance to capitalism had not kept Fedotov from 'loyal' adaptation to the Soviet power, and then that 'loyalty' had not prevented him from slithering down into counter-revolution, which was to drive him into the foul dens of spies. But the ear of Krylenko, straining to catch even the slightest sign of human self respect, heard only the *cry of a bribe*. And at this cry that old Taras Bulba of Russian liberalism, that hero of the counter-revolution A. A. Fedotov, answered with a sigh 'I am here, my son.'

I repeat, it is not a matter of æsthetics or of mere moral abomination. It is one of two worlds—the world which workers are forging in our factories, which is being created by our peasants, collective farmers, striving manfully to uproot the last traces of the cramped little smallholders and petty capitalists world—and a world which is putrefying at the roots and contaminating by its putrefaction all that is connected with it. The aspirations of that historically doomed world cannot create heroes. They can create only adventurers, speculators, careerists. In the corruption of that world are corrupted even those rare remnants of what was once the best of human traditions.

The picture presented by the accused counter-revolutionists at the trial in the Hall of Columns included some of the most prominent representatives of the world of applied science. Those bourgeois experts who want to turn away from this picture, who want to say that they repudiate it, must earn the right to do so. They cannot acquire that right by mere 'loyalty,' merely by fulfilling the obligations they have undertaken. Some of the accused were 'loyal' and discharged their obligations for quite a time. That right can be won only by realizing what capitalism is, and realizing too the necessity for taking part in the struggle against it, and only by realizing

what socialism is and taking part in the fight for it. When our 'intellectuals' tell us they are not politicians we must remind them that politics is the whole business of the development of society. Not to be a politician would mean you did not know where you wish to go, or whither you wished society to go. *Such ignorance is always a lie*, and it bursts like a soap bubble at its very first contact with the real struggle between the two worlds. It was not written at his birth that A. A. Fedotov was to end up in prison, sentenced for treason, for espionage, and for preparation of war against his own people. But when he failed to make a firm choice for the path along which history is marching it was of necessity decided whither destiny would bring him.

This is not a personal business, this sin of Fedotov, and therefore it intimately concerns the entire intelligentsia. The portrait may well be found lacking in attractiveness. Yet it is extremely instructive.

## OTHER INTELLECTUALS

*NOTE*

[The next essays selected for this book are three which deal with three persons who might have been hopeless intellectuals, incurables of the lesser middle class, but who were not.

Again we commence with a pacifist—Nansen, the great explorer, and his significance here is that at least from the year 1914 onwards he did strive constantly and tirelessly to cure himself of his useless pacifism. Then follows an essay on Romain Rolland, as a colossal example of a man of the same type who has won through.

Finally, we have a striking picture of a young Russian woman of the same class as that which produced Ramzin and Fedotov. The picture of Larissa Reisner is instructive because in her we have not a coarse, crude, masculine revolutionary woman (as some seem to imagine them all to be) but on the contrary an extremely sensitive, delicate, artist revolutionary. It is to be hoped that it will prove possible some day to publish her works in English, so that English readers may come to understand not merely that 'artistic sensitivity' and communism may go together, but that the first, in healthy form, is quite impossible without the other. A. B.]

## A GREAT EXPLORER WHO NEVER REACHED THE NEW WORLD

May, 1930

THE description of Fridtjof Nansen in the *Little Soviet Encyclopædia* is 'An outstanding scientist, a most daring explorer, a typical petty-bourgeois pacifist and philanthropist.' That is truth expressed in the dry language of an encyclopedia. But yet anybody who has read his books, or followed his social activity during the war and afterwards, or had opportunity of knowing him personally, will be extremely dissatisfied by this correct description.

The conception 'philanthropy' is bound up with persons of the Carnegie type, who first steal hundreds of millions and then use a fraction of it 'for the benefit of humanity'—according to their lights.

The conception 'pacifist' is bound up with a revoltingly stupid attempt to have people's throats cut without hurting them at all—or, worse still, with conscious hypocrites and liars whose endeavour it is to throw dust in the eyes of the masses in order to facilitate the working of the war machine. Fridtjof Nansen was of neither one nor the other type. What we have to ask is whether there is any organic connection between Nansen the man of science, the great explorer, and humanitarian Nansen calling on the League of Nations to provide food for the starving of Russia. There is a connection, and it explains the whole of Nansen.

Nansen's life is an illustration of the blind alley in which all the better members of the capitalist classes are to-day.

He started life as a student of natural science. Natural science is that magnificent science which once upon a time in the young days of the capitalist world lighted the hearts of the best men so that they were prepared to face prison or the

stake for the truths discovered. They threw God down from his heavenly throne and put an end to the privileged position of the earth among the other planets. They tried to find the great democratic bond uniting all natural phenomena. They took his superiority from man and turned him into a mere link in the animal world. And for every step in this revolution of thought they paid by incredible labour and deprivation, by a terrible struggle against their own inner doubts, against the prejudices of humanity behind which stood hoary centuries and in whose defence flamed the faggots at the stake. Our children who can lisp 'Hallo' down the telephone almost before they can say 'Mamma,' go up in aeroplanes as naturally as if flight were one of man's ordinary functions. It is difficult for us to imagine the sufferings contained in the dry and strictly mathematical equations of Copernicus's *de revolutionibus orbium celestium*.

Two artists have attempted to give a picture of the birth and verification of the truths of natural science. It is only on reading Wassermann's *Christopher Columbus* that, thanks to the writer's mastery, you begin to understand how shaken mankind was when it found out that the earth is round. This discovery upset the whole complex of human thought of the day. It was a challenge that set the world atrembling. When we read the discussions between Kepler and Tycho Brahe in Brod's novel, we realize how silly it is to picture the acceptance and confirmation of Copernicus's idea as a matter of mathematical and astronomical debate among a group of scientists calmly poring over diagrams of the universe in a peaceful study. The great Kepler was half-starved; Tycho Brahe a plaything of courtly whims, a man endeavouring in bloody agony and in sweat to find some halfway house between old and new.

Why this stress and strain, this life-sapping labour? What did it serve? Only a few scientific men seem to be clear that natural science is simply the foundation for development of



productive forces for the greater welfare of mankind. Bacon was perfectly correct in saying that the difference between the ancient world and his modern world of nascent capitalism consisted of three inventions—printing, gun-powder and the magnet ‘whence have followed innumerable changes, inso-much that no empire, no sect, no star seems to have exerted greater power and influence in human affairs than those mechanical discoveries’ (Bacon: *Novum Organum CXXIX*; Robertson’s edition, p. 300). Up till now inventions have been matters of chance, he went on to say. Science is necessary to help man make inventions consciously, when he will make Nature his servant. Man who is at one and the same time an interpreter, and an executor of Nature, enlarges his sphere of knowledge and activity in so far as he reveals the natural order of things by observation or action. Nothing more can he do or know. *Not all great scientists have seen the direct connection there is between their work and the material and social development of mankind, but certainly they have all believed that the progress of science and discovery of the great truths of natural science would make mankind happier.*

But now if you read the works of the great teachers based on the work of science, and compare their proud hopes with what science has actually given to the millions of the peoples of the world, the *cruel conflict going on in the heart of any scientist* who is not content with being a mere narrow specialist, but wants to be a real man of science, that is to say, a man searching for the bond between all phenomena, is as plain as a pike-staff.

A few days ago I was stirred to read that from his yacht in the Mediterranean Marconi had switched on electric lights in the capital of Australia. A few days later I read of a radio-telephone conversation carried on between Ramsay MacDonald in his study in London, and the Australian Premier in his study. A warm glow suffuses one’s heart as one reads of such things. An electric flash encircles the world in

a split second, and binds it close together and one continent hears the heart-beats of the other. But the next moment like a sharp knife comes the cruel thought that from London moneybag offices orders can be given in a minute over that radio-telephone to shoot down the people of India when they rise up—the people of India the majority of whom hardly once a year eat their fill. The thought that over the same radio-telephone, by means of which MacDonald the ‘labour’ Premier of Great Britain exchanged some buttery phrases with Scullin, the ‘labour’ Premier of Australia, some Churchill or other may some day give orders to drop tons of high explosives from the skies on the great ant-hill of workers building socialism in the U.S.S.R.

Science has so enlarged the productive forces of the world that by organizing them properly, and by freeing mankind from its leeches—by giving free play to the creative energies of the workers—everybody will be properly fed and clothed so that their thoughts will be able to rise from the dust of daily cares to the starry heights of the greatest problems of mankind. There is a book called *Middletown* by two bourgeois writers—Robert and Merrell Lynd—which describes working-class life in an average industrial American town, called Middletown. In the midst of the greatest technical progress and during a boom or ‘wave of prosperity,’ ninety per cent. of the workers are shown as receiving less than the minimum income that the American capitalist Government considers it possible to tax directly. Thirty per cent. of them live in foul-smelling houses. They have wireless sets. Many of them also own cheap second-hand Fords. Yet the conclusion reached by the Lynds after patient and exhaustive investigation was that behind the façade of motor-cars and wireless there are conditions of squalor and meanness which produce depression and shame.

But the very shortest period of unemployment means

sacrificing that wireless and the telephone. Stuart Chase writes of the East Side of New York as capped by a halo of wireless aerials, but the dirty hovels under the halo are packed with humanity to the last square foot. The picture of the average American, sitting in a large home, surrounded by miracles of technique and all kinds of comforts is simply a myth. On the same matter the American writer Stuart Chase, wrote 'It is highly questionable whether he (i.e., the American worker) lives more comfortably than he did in 1890.' This was written about workers who were receiving the highest wages in the world, twenty years after the war! And what thinking man can forget that war, making use of every achievement of science? 'If mankind had known what devilish destruction, what satanic calamities were being prepared for it just before the war ended, it would have shuddered,' Lloyd George said recently. And what are the masters of chemical science preparing for our youth and our children in Woolwich Arsenal, in the laboratories of Britain, France, Germany and Japan? At the London conference in 1924, that which completed the Locarno negotiations, 'silver-tongued' Briand said with quite a lyric tremor in his voice that the greatest reward that had come to him for his pacifist activities was a letter from a mother, who had written 'Now I look at my children without fears.' Poor, foolish mother, criminally deceived.

Those scientists who are not either simple vendors of knowledge to the highest bidder, or fools with a scientific degree, must long ago have asked themselves *for whom they were working*. Some, being afraid of the answer to this question, have sought forgetfulness in an affectation of disdain for mankind. Their attitude is this: if people let themselves be exploited and tyrannized, and crushed down, they must be considered mere sweepings, and there is no need to worry about them, or suffer over them—let us carry on and be the supermen! Others who are constitutionally

too weak to stomach this bluff have sought salvation in the soft mists of mysticism. But there is a third group who have tried to persuade themselves that however unlikely this may appear, still, by working for science, enlarging the field of knowledge, and unveiling mysteries of nature, they are serving mankind. To this third category belong brave explorers and patient researchers risking their lives in their laboratories.

Of such was Fridtjof Nansen. What was it moved this young scientist when he crossed Greenland on ski in deadly frost, or on his heroic ship *Fram* (which is Norwegian for 'Forward') to break through the Arctic ice to the North Pole? Every day of that furious struggle with nature, every day of such exploration is an *epic of human courage*, the most interesting kind of epic mankind knows. Did the thought of glory urge him on? There are thousands of cheaper ways of getting glory in the capitalist world than by really risking your life. Lust for profit? He had to beg from business men, from the governments, from the public, every penny of the large sum necessary for his expedition. Many, it may be, have been stimulated by the sporting sense of risk, by the craving to triumph over difficulties. But Nansen thought of people, of mankind, of what he could do as scientist, of how he might enlarge human knowledge. The study of the Arctic might not only open up new routes but also provide knowledge of atmospheric phenomena which would help in the struggle against crop failures and famine. Those are the ideas which inspired Nansen as he wrestled with death trying to tear their secrets from the Polar ice.

This is proved by the facts that *scientific work never entirely satisfied him*, and social work always had attraction for him. In struggling as a diplomat for the separation of Norway from Sweden he was endeavouring to break with the feudal past. Norway is a country where capitalism has not completely destroyed democracy, and it is understandable that

Nansen, who never was either a revolutionist or a socialist, believed that he was helping his people by separating Norway from Sweden. The war broke out. Nansen, stunned, horrified by the world slaughter, cast about wondering how to help at least those who so far had escaped destruction, how to rescue from scurvy and typhus the prisoners of war in concentration camps. After the war he took up the question of the victims, what remained of the population of Turkish Armenia, and rescued them from famine and destruction.

I once had an opportunity to discuss his activity and its palliative character with him. He spoke about war with deep burning hatred; he spoke of its victims as of something near and dear to him. It was plain that he endeavoured to drive away any thought of the limited value of his efforts by the thought that it was impossible to sit idle, he had to do something practical. He was entirely without sociological training. He had grown up in a country with comparatively slightly developed class contradictions. He knew next to nothing of the scores of thousands, the millions of fighters for socialism. Those he had heard of he considered travellers to a non-existent country, or at best one 'not yet existent.' He could not get beyond pacifism and philanthropy. His love for mankind could not get onto the road. His *Fram* ('Forward') grounded on the dangerous shoal of petty middle-class aberrations, and did not take him forward.

He deeply sympathized with the revolution in Russia, but he was full of trouble and mistrust. Would the Soviet explorers find the new land, would it be worth the heavy sacrifices? But yet it is sufficient to read his speech delivered before the League of Nations on the famine of 1921 in the U.S.S.R.—a speech not reported by any bourgeois telegraph agency, a speech hushed up by the 'free' bourgeois Press—to realize that after all here we have something more than a mere philanthropist, namely, *an intrepid Arctic traveller, whose heart was intimately bound in sympathy with the travellers*

*to the New Land of Socialism.* To the elegantly dressed, well-fed representatives of the bourgeois states gathered at the assembly of the League of Nations, Nansen cried 'If you have but the slightest idea of what struggle against famine and against the terrible forces of winter means, you will understand the situation in Russia and will act. Twenty million people are starving. To rescue them we need exactly half the cost of one war cruiser. This year's crop in Canada is so abundant that Canada alone could export three times more than is necessary to feed the starving in Russia; in the U.S.A. grain is rotting because they cannot sell it; in the Argentine the railways are using corn to fire the engines—and in Russia twenty million people are dying of starvation.'

He went further; he spoke of the campaign of lies against Soviet Russia which impeded the organization even of purely philanthropic assistance. He disclosed that this campaign of lies was organized by some central agency which aimed at preventing any help for the starving, lest that help strengthen the Soviet power. '*Is there any man in this Assembly who is prepared to say that twenty million people had better perish than the Soviet power be strengthened?*' Then, deeply stirred by the silence with which the Assembly met his words, he warned the assembled representatives of the capitalist states that he would not rest until he had aroused *the peoples* of other countries to compel their governments to provide the means of helping starving Russia.

Poor, poor friend of mankind! He forgot that the people sitting before him not only had never known what it is to struggle against hunger and cold, but owed their own positions to the hunger and cold of the masses of the people. He forgot that for the sake of the victory of world capital over the U.S.S.R. those men there were not only ready now to sacrifice twenty million people, but that they had just come from sacrificing something like that number in the imperialist war. He forgot that the famine in Russia was a direct result of their

interventionist activities, by which they were endeavouring to suffocate the newborn socialism before it could grow up and put an end to the exploitation by which they themselves lived.

When I myself put this before Nansen he recognized the correctness of our view. But he had not the strength to go on to draw the logical conclusions. One great Russian scientist, *Timiryazev*, did find his way to communism. He had been cradled in the Russia of serfdom, but before he died he was to see not merely the fall of tsarism but the fall of the Russian bourgeoisie too. That great scientist understood the evolution of 'social species.' But even in the country of revolution Timiryazev was *one of the very few scientists* who definitely pushed off from the bourgeois shore and crossed to the socialist side.

But it was more difficult for Nansen to break with the old, perhaps partly because he was a son of the country whose language, as Engels once pointed out, underwent fewer changes than any of the Germanic languages for the reason that Norway is a country lying apart from the great historic flow of events.\* Nansen, is a tragic monument of the epoch in which science was a monopoly of the bourgeoisie, and so powerless to help mankind. In the person of its best representatives that epoch senses death in the very breath of capitalism but is unable to break from its embrace.

Seventy years ago Lassalle dreamt of the union of science and the working class. Alas, in not one of the capitalist countries, in spite of the wounds capitalism has inflicted on mankind, has this union been effected, though there is nothing the proletariat reveres so much as real science. The only fire which is to-day being used to help the proletariat melt down its chains, to burn up the outworn edifice of capitalism and to

\* Cf. also *Engels, Letter to Ernst*, June 5th, 1890; published in *International Literature*, No. 4, 1934, p. 80. This letter is also interesting in regard to Nansen's general outlook.

establish a new civilization, is that fiery science which Promethean Marx snatched from the bourgeoisie. So far only a minority of the old Russian scientists have wholeheartedly given their services to this great task. There are even quite a number who 'in the name of science' try to hinder our work.

Science, which in the early days of capitalism was revolutionary, has grown decrepit together with capitalism, and will again become the great inventor, the conqueror of nature, the servant of all mankind only when liberated by liberated labour. Then the international proletariat will recall those scientists who felt the stranglehold of capitalism, and looked for means of liberation even though they did not find them. Among them will be the name of Fridtjof Nansen, even though his *Fram* did get stuck in the ice.



## GREETINGS TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

January 21st, 1931

TO-DAY what remains of the so-called civilized world is celebrating the sixty-fifth birthday of the great French writer Romain Rolland. The greatest of French writers will not receive any greetings to-day from the French Government. Neither M. Tardieu, open expression of the French bourgeoisie's greed for expansion, nor M. Briand who wraps the greed up in talk of peace, will congratulate him. The bourgeois press will be silent about it too, because it cannot honour a man who does not lend his voice to the imperialist wolf-pack, but instead raises it to protest against the constant hue and cry against the land of the Soviets. But those in the ranks of the so-called advanced intelligentsia who still clothe themselves in a mantle of humanitarianism will drown him in flattery though of course they will not follow him a single inch.

But the revolutionary workers of the whole world, and in the first place the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. send him sincere and hearty greetings, accompanying them not by words of flattery, but by words of honest proletarian truth.

Romain Rolland is worthy of such truth, for it was he himself who in a letter to his Russian readers said that the main connecting-link between him and Russian literature 'was above all an ardent passion for truth, a passion not abstract but physical, a passion of mind comparable to one's passion for the woman one loves.' The truth about Romain Rolland is that he has always been a writer expressing the best ideas preserved from the golden age of the bourgeoisie. He has always had a great love for the human intellect, for its attempts to master the world, a love for the labour which puts great ideas into life, a love of fight, a longing to get beyond the

narrow confines of one nation and unite all humanity on the basis of its forward striving.

It is not surprising that Romain Rolland, inspired by such ideals, should take up a negative attitude towards the era of capitalism, which started from humanism, passed to nationalism, and now has reached the stage of cannibalism. With enthusiasm he subscribed to the Tolstoyan critique of bourgeois civilization, although, as a son of France, he could neither share Tolstoy's asceticism nor deny the importance of the modern application of science and art. From Tolstoy he took the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, as the best way of resisting evil, and when the whole world was plunged into the blood bath, he left the stifling atmosphere of savage nationalism of France to wait in Switzerland till the storm was over, occupying himself meanwhile in doing all he could for the prisoners of war of the various countries.

He knew quite well that his flight from the bloody struggle was a capitulation. But being quite detached from the working class and with no faith in its strength, and moreover being prevented from seeing the least sign of that strength by the shameful shroud with which international Social-Democracy kept the proletariat covered, as if it were a corpse, he could not find the way out. The October Revolution revived his hopes. He was all attention. The poisonous stream of lies with which the bourgeoisie sought to kill all interest in the October Revolution among the European intelligentsia made no impression whatsoever upon him, for he knew too well the system of organized deceit which goes by the name of 'free and untrammelled Press,' and 'freedom of speech' in capitalist countries. From the accounts of eye-witnesses returning from the U.S.S.R. he began to realize that in that country whose literature he liked so much a new world was coming to birth.

But Romain Rolland still remained an intellectual, i.e., he belonged to the strata of society whose 'advanced' representatives even are like the poor Jew from Zhitomir, in

Babel's story *Gedalia*, who argued this way 'Dis Pole shoot, my sir, because he is counter-revolution. You shoot because you are revolution. Revolution, oh, dat is satisfaction, and satisfaction don't like to have orphans in de home. A good man do good deeds. Revolution dat is good deeds by good peoples. But good peoples do not kill. Oh, no. Well, dat means de revolution is being made by wicked peoples. But de Poles dey are also wicked peoples. Who den will tell Gedalia which is de revolution and which is de counter-revolution? . . . And here all we learned people, we fall on our faces and cry, "Woe to us! Where is dis dear revolution we want?"'

Like this poor forgotten Jew from Zhitomir, Romain Rolland, a great writer of a great civilization, wanted an 'international of good people,' and wished to see 'every person registered and put on first category rations.' He hailed the revolution for its magnificent struggle, for its attempt to build a new life, but he criticized its bloodshed, criticized it because during the struggle it did not allow freedom of speech to everyone, irrespective of what they wanted to use that great weapon for. Yet he did understand the absurdity of such a view. In January, 1923, he wrote to Balmont and Bunin like this 'In Russia I see a nation which at the cost of unspeakable suffering is endeavouring to bring into life a new order. This new order is all smeared with blood like a human child just drawn from its mother's womb. In spite of the horror, in spite of the terrible mistakes and the crimes, I go up to the new-born and take it in my hands; it is hope, the pitiful hope of the future of mankind.'

But having achieved such an understanding of historical truth, he was forced to confess that though the Saint-Justes and the Robespierres did found a new world, if he had lived at the epoch of the French revolution he would have been a Girondist.

The intelligentsia considers itself the salt of the earth. But nowhere else can one see the real nature of the petty middle class, oscillating between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie so clearly as in the works of those intellectual writers who think that they stand above all classes.

It needed the spectacle of the continuous preparations of the international bourgeoisie for a new imperialist war, it needed all the shamelessness with which pacifism prostituted itself to imperialism, to cause this great French writer who dreamed like that of a gentle and bloodless revolution, to take a forward stride. *Izvestia* prints an article by Romain Rolland in which he not only denounces in the most definite manner the *lie of democracy while capitalist domination lasts*, not only denounces the *Pan-Europe* idea as a veiled preparation for war against the U.S.S.R., but declares that the U.S.S.R. is *the hope of mankind* and that 'if the U.S.S.R. is threatened no matter by whom, I shall take my stand with the U.S.S.R.' Furthermore he makes the following great statement of principle: 'In those days when I was slowly and painfully freeing myself from the illusions that fettered my mind (the lies of official historians, the lies about national and social conditions, the lie of traditions of 'own countries') and with difficulty and fearfully beginning to understand *that answer which has liberated one part of mankind, the answer that other peoples should have given their governments*, I did not dare say exactly what I thought. *I do so now. It is Lenin's answer of 1917, 'Revolt of the European armies against the leaders of war, and fraternization on the battlefield.'*

These words do great honour to the great French writer. It is not easy at sixty-five to scrap one's fundamental attitude, and tear from one's history the page on which is written non-resistance to evil, and further to recognize the rightness of Lenin's call for the *conversion of imperialist war into civil war*. One needs to be a *courageous man, a courageous thinker*, to dare

express this thought at the moment when imperialist France is preparing for a new war and when for this recognition of Lenin's historic truthfulness Romain Rolland may to-day expect a machine-gun fire of lies and libel, and to-morrow a more brutal response.

Though we know that much still separates Romain Rolland from all the conclusions which logically follow recognition of Lenin's slogan, we most warmly hail the step he has taken, because we see in it a political symptom of general historic significance. *The masses of the lesser middle class did not understand the lesson of the world war.* The world bourgeoisie, the ruling capitalist class, is just about to repeat the lesson. It is showing the lesser middle-class strata its real bestial face. Those who believed the 1914-1918 war (1914-1917 war for us) was a 'war to end war' are due to wake up when they get the lesson the second time. The great French writer's shift-over foreshadows certain sections of the petty middle class turning against imperialism.

We should like to see Romain Rolland gather courage and speak of the way he came to his conclusions, and moreover, speak not to small literary circles, but to the *wide masses*. They it is who are primarily interested in understanding whither the world is moving. It is they who have to pay with their life's blood for imperialist policies. It is they who will make Lenin's slogan reality. From the depth of our heart we desire the great writer to get into direct touch with the wide masses, from whom alone he can draw the strength which is essential when you give out slogans smelling of blood and iron. There is a Polish poem in which a worker says to the poet 'I do the fighting for your dreams.' The struggle against imperialism is a tremendous task and anyone who does not want to be content with dreaming about it all cannot afford to remain isolated.

He must not remain captive to even a fragment remaining of his old illusions—one of which is evident from Romain

## OTHER INTELLECTUALS

Rolland's feelings for Gandhi, who fetters the strength of the Indian people. We know very well how difficult it will be at his age for Romain Rolland to go right to the end of the path he has chosen. We wish him the health and courage essential for the struggle.

## LARISSA REISNER

WE are drawing nigh the tenth anniversary of that moment when in the dark night of mankind over the trenches in brilliant splendour rose the red star of the Soviets. Out of the fire of guns, out of the blood of the slain, out of the sweat of munition workers, out of the sufferings of the millions asking themselves what purpose those sufferings could serve—was born the October Revolution. The roar of guns and yelps of the capitalist and Social-Democratic Press tried to drown it; but it stood firm and unshakable, stood and all mankind cast timid glances on it; some with benedictions and hope, others with foul language and curses. It became a boundary between two worlds—a world perishing in filth, and a new world in travail. It became a touchstone of the spirit. All that was 'spiritual' in the bourgeois world, not only its priests and its scholars, not only its writers and its artists, but all the 'intellectuals' of the labour movement (that is to say, the great majority of the bourgeois intelligentsia)—all those graciously deigning to 'save' the proletariat—all were terrified by the form of the proletarian revolution. Men like Kautsky, Plekhanov and Guesde who had spent a lifetime calling men and women to revolution, now turned the other way.

Part of the western-European intelligentsia that did show some sympathy for the October Revolution saw in it no more than the end of the war—a revolt against war. They were rare ones who foresaw the beginning of a new world, and most of them were in a state of jitters. Only an insignificant part of the intelligentsia joined the Bolsheviks in Russia. Russian intellectuals, even those who had been close to the proletariat, were unable to conceive of this backward country breaking the front of world capitalism.

Among those few who joined the struggling proletariat

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not merely with determination, but also with a profound understanding of the world significance of what was happening and with undaunted faith in victory, with a cry of rapture, was Larissa Reisner. She was only two and twenty when the death hour of bourgeois Russia struck, but it was not given her to see the tenth anniversary of the revolution in the ranks of which she had served so courageously, whose struggles she portrayed as they could only be portrayed by one in whom the soul of a great poet was one with the soul of a great fighter.

A few articles and small books are all Larissa Reisner has left. Her one theme is the October Revolution. But so long as people struggle and think and feel—so long as they want to know 'how it all happened,' they will read those books and, once they begin them, will not lay them down until they have reached the last page, because they breathe the revolution.

It is not yet the time to write this outstanding woman's biography. Her biography should include not only breathless pages of the political history of the October Revolution, but should also dip deep into the history of the spiritual life of pre-revolutionary Russia, into the story of the birth of New Man. My intention here is merely to jot down a few thoughts, an outline sketch, some notes which may serve as guide to such a work.

Larissa Reisner was born on May 1st, 1895, in Lublin (Poland) where her father was one of the staff of the Pulawa Agricultural College. The Baltic-German blood of her father in her made a happy mixture with the Polish blood of her mother. She inherited both the old German culture of generations of disciplined jurists and the passionate fieriness of Poland.

She was educated in Germany and France, to which countries her father first went for scientific studies and where he remained as a political refugee. At home she saw a hard spiritual struggle, as her father changed from a conservative



jurist and monarchist into a republican and socialist. The atmosphere in which Larissa grew up underwent fundamental changes. German democrats—Bratt and Treger—and the Social-Democrats took the place of Russian professors.

The young girl's lively intelligent eyes were very observant. She saw both Bebel, and cheerful Karl Liebknecht, with whom Professor Reisner, chief expert in the Koenigsberg trial, often had meetings. All her life Larissa remembered her visits to 'Auntie Liebknecht.' As if it were but yesterday she would tell of the steaming coffee-pot brought onto the table during these visits, and the shortbread to which her 'auntie' treated her. These memories were soil in which grew later her warm attachment to Germany. Children of the workers of Zehlendorf with whom she went to school, Theresa Benz, the working-class woman who helped her mother in the house—all lived in Larissa's memory, so that when in 1923 she was living illegally in a worker's family in Berlin she felt quite at home. Both the maid who had once scolded her, and was now old and the maid's granddaughter, with whom Larissa went walking in the Tiergarten, saw in her someone near to them, not an intellectual superior foreigner.

The Russian revolution whose waves reverberated across the German border found an echo in the little girl. Her father and mother kept up friendly connections with the Russian revolutionist refugees. Of course the little lass did not know that the letters Lenin wrote to her father were one day to be her pride. Comrades who appeared and disappeared mysteriously were, naturally, more exciting to her imagination. Then the revolution of 1905-1906 broke out and her father was able to return to Russia. So Larissa found herself in St Petersburg. Up till then her way had led straight to the revolution. Now it turned aside, and the remarkable thing is that she was not entirely led astray from the true road, the road of her whole life. Her father, a lecturer in public law, but a Marxist, came into conflict with the liberal pro-

fessorate of St Petersburg University. The great world of science is after all only a very tiny worldlet of scientists. And there was no filth, no meanness, no villainy, which these great scientists would stop short of using in their struggle with an enemy. They were suspicious of the socialist—and what was the worst suspicion they could have of a socialist? Why, that he was in secret contact with the reactionary movement. Actuated in part by personal motives, that old gossip Burtsev spread these rumours. For years Professor Reisner fought for his political honour against the ‘one-eyed monster’ of Peer Gynt, against slanders, lies, rumours, against suspicions against which no legal proceedings were possible. He dropped out of political life. The house became filled with need and worry, and at last Reisner was hopelessly soured and disillusioned. The little girl, being bound to her parents by close bonds of love, knew quite well why the parental home came to be more and more deserted, why her father’s voice was less and less often to be heard, why he paced restlessly up and down for hours. Memories of this left a deep mark in her heart, and though they erected a wall between her and the revolutionary circles they could not distract her from the problems of socialism. While still in the secondary school, which was a real torture for the talented and lively girl, she wrote a play, ‘Atlantis,’ which was published in 1913 by Shipovnik. This drama, though not well developed in form, already showed the direction of her thoughts. She depicts a man whose aim is to save society from ruin at the cost of his own life. A true child’s work! No individual, whatever he may do, can save the world from destruction. But the girl who wrote it certainly spent long nights sitting up in bed thinking about humanity and its sufferings. The material for this first work of Larissa’s had come from Pelman’s *History of Communism and Socialism in the Ancient World*. What makes it still more interesting is that at this time Larissa was under the direct influence of Leonid Andreev. This considerable

individualist writer was not only her teacher in literature; he also influenced her spiritual development. Yet he did not succeed in diverting her from the path she had chosen. Neither he, nor the 'acmeist' group of poets—such as Goumilyov, who influenced her in her form—were able to do that.

When in 1914 all these poets became defenders of the imperialist war, she, like her father, without a moment's hesitation, put up a determined defence of international socialism. They pawned their last belongings to get means to publish a magazine *Rudin*, to start a struggle with the betrayers of international solidarity. Only the political isolation of the Reisner family, which was of course well known to the political police, explains how such a magazine was allowed to make an appearance at all. Otherwise the merciless cartoons against Plekhanov, Burtsev and Struve would have been enough to have it stopped. The struggle with the censorship and with financial difficulties was carried on by the nineteen-year-old Larissa. It was she who carried on the battle of wits, by means of sharp biting verse and cutting sarcastic notes. But the struggle had to come to an end. Like any war it required money, and that they had not. When there was nothing more to be pawned the journal ceased to exist. Larissa began to work on the *Letopis* (Chronicle)—the only internationalist journal then legally existing in Russia.

From the very outset of the February revolution Larissa started work in workers' clubs. Besides this she wrote for Gorki's paper *Novaya Zhizn* ('New Life') which, though it could not make up its mind to come out wholeheartedly for Soviet power, did at least carry on a struggle against any coalition with the bourgeoisie. Larissa's pamphlet against Kerensky shows that with her refined artistic sense she understood at once the falseness and inner emptiness of the Kerensky Government. The little sketches and essays, in which she describes the life of workers' clubs and theatres in the days preceding October, are very interesting. What is striking in these

essays is the deep understanding of the masses' natural urge towards creative work. In the first clumsy attempts of workers and soldiers to put their own picture of life on the stage, which to superior intellectuals was a subject for contemptuous sneers, Larissa could see a manifestation of the creative powers of the new class, of new social strata, which did not merely want to perceive reality but also to represent it and hand it on. Her deeply creative nature sensed the creative impulse of the revolution and she followed at its call.

In the first months after the October revolution she worked at the reception and cataloguing of art treasures brought in to the museums. With her excellent knowledge of the history of the arts, she helped to safeguard for the proletariat much of the cultural material left by the bourgeoisie. Soon, however, the first battles with counter-revolution began. Now the first need was to fight for very life, for the revolution's right to existence, so that the foundations for its distant triumph might be laid. Larissa, who now joined the Party, left for the Czechoslovakian front. She could not be satisfied with being only an onlooker in the struggle between the old and the new worlds. She worked in Sviyazhsk where in the struggle with the Czechs the Red Army was being hardened. She was in the Volga fleet struggle. But she does not mention this in her book *The Front*. She tells there only of the fight of the Red Armies and modestly leaves unsaid the part she played in them. So we must let another who took part in these struggles, A. Kremlev, Larissa's comrade, tell about her. In the *Red Star*, organ of the Revolutionary Military Council, he wrote on the occasion of her death :

'It was near Kazan. The whites were sweeping ahead. We had just learned that in our rear, at Tiourlyama—the whites had broken through, massacred our guards, and exploded eighteen trucks of shells. Our unit was cut in two. The staff was with us, but what had become of those who were cut off?

'The enemy was moving towards the Volga not only in the rear now of the army, but the fleet too.

'Order: to break through, reconnoitre and get in touch with those who were cut off.

'Larissa went, took with her a lad named Vaniushka Ribakov and a third, I don't remember exactly who.

'Night, freezing cold, alone, not knowing what lay ahead. But Larissa stepped out confidently, oh how surely, down the unknown road!

'Near the village of Kurochkin they were spotted. Fired on, all round. Could scarcely creep along. Cover! But yet she joked . . . Her inward agitation only made her voice more velvety.

'They slipped out of the line of fire—they were through.

'“Tired, brother? And you, Vania? . . .”

'By her solicitude she seemed to tower high above the others.

'They could have kissed that wonderful woman's road-soiled hands.

'She moved fast, with long strides, they had to half run to keep up with her. . . .

'And in the morning they were in the camp of the whites. The remains of camp-fires, corpses—Tiourlyama. From here, almost dropping with fatigue, they made for Shikhrani where the Red Lithuanian regiment stood.

'The front was reunited. And this woman with her frail smile was the link which bound it.

'“Comrades, look after these lads. . . . Me? No, I am not tired.”

' . . . And then: reconnaissances around Upper Ouslon and the two Sorkvashes, up to Pyani Bor. Eighty-verst journeys on horseback without showing fatigue.

'There was but little pleasure these days, though there was often a smile on Larissa's lips during those heavy marches.

'Then came Enzeli, Baku, and Moscow!

This is the account given by a sailor who was in one of the landing parties.

It is not Larissa Reisner who has died but a woman from the barricades.

The sailors in the field came to love her, warmly, as one of

themselves, because her courage was combined with simplicity and humanity. There was no falsity in the attitude of the masses towards her. It did not enter anyone's mind on the front that she was not only their companion in arms, but also the wife of the Commander of the fleet. She had married Raskolnikov in 1918. And in just the same way, when she was Commissar attached to the Naval Staff in Moscow in 1919, she was able to establish really friendly relations with the office specialists who had come over to our side—Admirals Altyater and Behrens. Her culture, delicacy, tact, kept these former admirals of the tsarist fleet from feeling too keenly that they were under the control of an outsider.

In 1920 she left for Afghanistan, where her husband had been appointed as plenipotentiary. She spent two years at the court of the Eastern despot, playing the part required of her in the colourful diplomatic festivals, carrying on the diplomatic game in a struggle to influence the Amir's wives. A 'brilliant' and dirty job, and it would not have been surprising if it had ruined this young woman, now so far away from the struggling proletariat, and torn her away from the Revolution. But Larissa Reisner was reading serious Marxian literature. She studied British imperialism, the history of the East, the history of the struggle for liberation in neighbouring India. There in the mountains of Afghanistan she felt herself a part of the world revolution and prepared for a new struggle. Her book *Afghanistan* shows the widening of her horizon, how from being a Russian revolutionist she became a fighter in the international proletarian army.

In 1923 she returned to Soviet Russia. The land of workers and peasants had now an entirely different appearance from when she left it. The Spartan days of military communism, which seemed to have made a direct leap from capitalism to socialism, had given place to the New Economic Policy. Larissa understood, as we all did, the necessity for this step. It was essential to give scope to the economic initiative of the

peasantry, not merely in order to get raw material for industry, but simply in order not to die of hunger. Larissa understood it by reason. But she wondered whether it was possible by that road to arrive at socialism. The answers given her by the Party and by her own mind could not quiet her uneasiness. She understood that no continuance of the regime of war communism was possible. But in the depth of her heart she regretted the impossibility of an immediate heroic breakthrough, arms in hand, to the new social order. Yes, she was ready to admit the streets of our cities were alive again. Trucks were laden with goods, shops were opened, factory whistles sounded again, but perhaps it was not only we who were growing stronger, but also our bourgeoisie. Should we be able to manage them? Would not corruption penetrate even our ranks? If forced to participate in commerce, would not our economic leaders be infected by the poison of capitalist morals? Would not the rot reach even the body of the Party? All through the summer of 1923 Larissa was in a state of anxiety looking about her with inner apprehension.

In September she came to me with a request to help her to go to Germany. This was after the mass strikes against the Cuno Government in which the proletarian masses of Germany made another attempt to throw off their chains. Poincaré had occupied the Ruhr, the mark was falling with giddy rapidity, and the Russian proletariat was watching the situation in Germany with breathless attention. Larissa was longing to be there. She was longing to fight in the ranks of the German proletariat and to draw them into close understanding with the Russian workers. The proposal pleased me very much. If it was true that the German working class did not clearly understand what was going on in Russia, it was also true that our Russian workers were wont to represent the struggle of the German proletariat in too simplified and schematic a form. I was convinced that Larissa would be better than anybody else at establishing vital connection

between these two armies of the proletariat. She was not only a contemplative artist, but also a fighter artist who was able to see the struggle from within and to depict its essential forward drive—the forward drive of human destiny. Yet I could not help feeling that her trip to Germany was a flight from unresolved doubts.

Larissa arrived in Dresden on October 21st, 1923, at the very moment when the troops of General Mueller reoccupied the capital of Red Saxony. As a soldier she understood the necessity for retreat. But when a few days later there came news of revolt in Hamburg, life returned to her. She wanted to leave for Hamburg at once, and grumbled because she was obliged to remain in Berlin. For days by market stalls and shops she mingled with the unemployed and hungry masses, who were trying to buy a scrap of bread for some millions of marks. She sat for hours in hospitals filled with exhausted workers, and learned of their bitter thoughts and cares. I was living illegally in Germany at that time (under a false name) and meeting only Party leaders, who were unable to be in direct contact with the masses. Larissa was living the life of those masses.

Whether in conversation with the unemployed in the Tiergarten, on November the 9th, at the Social-Democratic celebration of the German Revolution, or celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversary with the communist group, she knew how to find a key to people's hearts, was always able to grasp a piece of their life. She lived among the working masses of Berlin, and they were as near to her as the proletarian masses of Petersburg, as the sailors of the Baltic fleet. Proudly she returned from a demonstration in the Lustgarten, where despite General Seeckt's armoured cars the Berlin proletariat had given visible proof of the existence of the 'forbidden' Communist Party.

At last Larissa was afforded the opportunity of leaving for Hamburg in order to describe and immortalize for the



German and world proletariat the struggles of the Hamburg workers.

'After all that flabbiness and greasiness, here is something solid, strong and vital,' she wrote immediately after reaching Hamburg. 'It was difficult at first to conquer their mistrust and prejudice. But as soon as the Hamburg workers recognized a comrade in me, I was able to plumb the depths of their simple, great and tragic experiences.'

She lived among the desolate wives of the Hamburg fighters for freedom, sought out the fugitives in their retreats, attended sessions of the court and meetings of the Social-Democrats. At night she read Laufenberg, the historian of Hamburg and of the Hamburg movement. The stacks of material she collected in the course of those weeks are piled before me as I write. They witness how she worked—with what feeling of deep responsibility, of awe—because every trifling episode of that struggle sounded to her like a 'song of songs' of humanity. Even when back in Moscow she spent many hours with a comrade who had been a leader of the uprising and had been obliged afterwards to flee. With him she went through all this material, and when doubts arose concerning particular facts, she corresponded with other comrades about them. Her little book *Hamburg at the Barricades* was written not only by an enthusiastic artist but by a fighter for fighters. The German proletariat has been in hundreds of skirmishes and battles with their enemies, but none has been described with such love and appreciation as this struggle of the Hamburg proletariat. Larissa Reisner dealt generously by those whom she loved, and the respectable Reichs-Tribunal made no mistake when it ordered this thin little book by a Russian Communist to be committed to the flames.

She returned from Germany, but defeat did not dismay her. In Hamburg she had seen the fire under the ashes. She knew how even unsuccessful fights produce strong men for future

fighths. But she also learned that it was useless to expect any near victory of revolution in Europe.

After her return to Soviet Russia she needed to examine herself and also find out what had been going on among the masses, who after all are now the determining factor of history. And being a person who perceived reality directly, she could not get the clarity she wanted merely by way of reading and discussion. She went to the industrial and coal-mining districts of the Urals and of the Don basin, to the textile district of Ivanok-vosnesensvo and to petty middle-class white Russia. She spent whole days in trucks, in horse-carts, on horseback. Once again she lived with working-class families. She went down into the mines, she took part in meetings of factory managements and committees and trade unions, and talked to the peasants. All the time she was feeling her way through the darkness, sensitively catching the realities of life. Her book *Coal, Iron and Living People* was the fruit of this work, and it was work writers would have taken up—hard both physically and morally. Yet her book reflects but a trifling part of what she went through, what she thought and felt.

With this book began a new artistic and ideological period in Larissa Reisner's creative life. With this book she took her stand on solid ground ideologically as a communist; and as a writer she had found her style. Her doubts had disappeared. She saw how the working class could lead in construction. They were building socialism. Though they dripped with sweat from blast furnaces, or went down half-naked into mines, or grumbled at times about their wages, the best part of them were firmly convinced that their labour and sufferings were in the name of socialism. In a clumsy uncouth manager she recognized an old comrade from the front, who even here had to hold the reins with an iron hand, though at the same time he listened attentively to the masses in order to make allowance for every possible factor. She saw the colossal

force which the revolution had awakened in the lowest strata of the population. This strengthened her faith that we should overcome all those difficulties connected with the revival of capitalist tendencies. She knew that petty bourgeois elements were like a bog which threatened to swallow up the mightiest of forces, but she also learned to see the strange flowers which blossom in this marsh. At the same time she now saw quite clearly the way the struggle against the dangers threatening the republic of labour should be waged and by what barriers the proletariat and the Communist Party should safeguard themselves. When she felt that she had gained clear insight, and had decided that her place was in this struggle, she began to sharpen her weapon. Her pen was her weapon. Formerly Larissa had not given particular thought to the question *for whom she was writing*. She had an excellent knowledge of the history of literature and the arts. Her style, rich and refined, revealed not only her natural keenness of observation, but also the many-sided culture embodied in her. The style of *The Front* and *Afghanistan* reminds one of fine lace, of filigree. But now she quite consciously threw away some of this ornamentation, and simplified the designs of her embroideries, though this did not mean that she tried to become a 'popular' writer for worker readers. Her desire was to create for the proletariat an art full and rich in all real values.

Larissa did a great deal of work towards the end of 1924 and throughout 1925. She read a vast number of books on Russian and world economics. I am not going to say she was any lover of figures. When she had waded through one or two tedious text-books she would beg you to give her something 'with some taste to it' about oil or wheat, and she would relax over Delaisi's work on oil trusts,\* Norris's epic of wheat-growing.

At the same time she was making a serious study of the history of revolution. She prepared lectures about the 1905

\* Francis Delaisi, *Le Pétrole*, 1921; translated as *Oil*, 1922.

revolution for the Party cell of the armoured-car school. And, when after studying the actual material, she began on Lenin's articles of this period (1904-1908), she discovered the greatness of the simplicity of our teacher's style and appreciated his work from a purely æsthetic standpoint. Thus her art came to include new elements. One can see this in reading her description of the Krupp plants, or her account of the Junkers' factories in *The Land of Hindenburg* and in *The Decembrists*. In the first two descriptions she keeps up a strictly technical style throughout. By this I do not mean that she larded her language with technical terms, but that her interest in economics had taught her to think methodically. She had learned to perceive a machine or a factory building not only visually, but also mentally. The style of *The Decembrists* was influenced by a historical view. But again there is nothing counterfeit, no deliberately archaic style. She simply saw those people in their real setting.

But neither history nor economics were her major interests. They were merely means of investigating human relationships, how men and women live and struggle under given conditions. Side by side with the colossal plants, Larissa described miserable workers' huts. In the Decembrist Kakhovski she showed a 'debased and insulted' person by drawing a never-to-be-forgotten silhouette of a German legal mind, who made a sketch of an ideal bureaucracy for the tsar, and ended his life in the snows of Siberia, derided and forgotten. She showed us pitiful human worms broken by a giant of machine construction or on the wheel of history.

Now she was mature as artist and revolutionist, Larissa Reisner began to plan a new work. She planned a trilogy of the life of the Ural workers. The first part was to show a serf workshop at the time of the Pugachov revolt; the second the exploitation of the workers during the time of tsarism, and the third—socialist construction. Together with this she had planned a portrait gallery of the predecessors of socialism

—not only portraits of Thomas More, Münzer, Babeuf, Blanqui, but also portraits of unsung proletarian heroes right up to the titanic struggle of our days. Sometimes she was frightened by the tasks she set herself. She was very modest and often doubted the power of her own talent. But there is little doubt she would have mastered them, because her powers were growing daily.

But she was not destined to give all that was latent within her. She fell not in the struggle with the capitalist class, not in that fight in which she had so often looked death in the face, but in a struggle with that Mother Nature she had loved so passionately. When on her death bed her last gleam of consciousness was a rejoicing in the sun whose rays were sending her a parting greeting. She spoke of how fine it would be in the Crimea, where she was going to recuperate, and how lovely it would be when her wearied brain filled up again with new thoughts. She promised to struggle for life up to the very end. And she only retired from the struggle when she finally lost consciousness.

A few articles and books are Larissa Reisner's sole legacy. Articles scattered in newspapers and journals, several scores of letters, all these have yet to be collected. They will live as long as memory of the first proletarian revolution. They will carry the news of what this revolution meant for all peoples, for West and East, for Hamburg, for Afghanistan, for Leningrad, for the Urals. And this woman-warrior, in whose intellect and heart everything found an answering chord will arise after death by her books and be a living witness of the proletarian revolution.

## A NEW STAGE IN CIVILIZATION

## NOTE

[The final group of three essays follows directly on from the preceding. The picture of Timiryazev, as of a major figure of science of tsarist days who grasped the meaning of the new world, provides a perfect introduction to Radek's study of science under communism. The study of Marxist science should be read in conjunction with the studies of child education and the position of women. This provides a glimpse of three important—fundamental—aspects of the world of the future.

Among intellectuals whose chief claim to intellect in regard to Marxist dialectics seems to be their ability to avoid reading any of the sources—whose behaviour resembles that of the ostrich—it is considered a matter for jest that 'in Moscow,' where of course nobody is free to say or write what he thinks, poor scientists are under pain of torture obliged to mention the name of Lenin or Marx somewhere in every treatise, and that this fetishism is what is called 'Marxist science.'

It does not occur perhaps to those intellectuals that a world of scientists—the non-Marxian world—which with ungainly efforts is trying to obtain some cohesion in science and world view by various forms of animism and re-invention of deities and godheads—that a world of science like that represented by certain 'leading' physicists, is anything but edifying. And if our intellectuals would only raise their bashful heads from the shifting bogs in which they try to hide them, they would see that Marxian dialectics

are not kowtowing, nor 'made in Moscow.' The reverse is the truth in every respect. Moscow is made in Marxian dialectics, and kowtowing is a great art reserved for the Press of capitalist countries.

Marxism, the world conception of the revolutionary working-class, which alone can make possible that complete collaboration of all individuals which is the prerequisite of progressing to a final stage of scientific research and explanation of life, of course does not make any attempt to 'invent' a new set of data. No, it does this: it makes possible a universal interpretation of the data provided by scientific research, and by doing this it gives research an inestimably powerful stimulus. Marxian dialectics provide a conscious constructive conception of evolution which alone can give sense to the partial and scattered discoveries of bourgeois science.

Finally, not as contrast, but as logical conclusion, there is the essay on the shock-workers. To this essay has been allotted place of honour at the end of the book, because these are the men and women of the creative working-class on whose visionary energy in the last resort the whole of progress and civilization rests. A. B.]

## C. A. TIMIRYAZEV

THE workers of the Kursk railroad shops have elected Clement Arkadievich Timiryazev, the veteran of Russian science, to membership of the Moscow Soviet of Workers and Red Army Deputies. The news has rejoiced our working masses, as a guarantee of union between science, without which no good organization of our social life is possible, and the working class, the only class which is compelled consciously to build up a new society, if it would not perish. But when I heard of the election of Clement A. Timiryazev I was deeply moved, and not only by the token it afforded of the brotherhood of science and labour to which all socialists have looked forward since the time of Thomas More, since the renascence of science and the birth of the idea of socialism. The news that eighty-year-old Timiryazev, who had known Darwin personally, would sit in the Soviet of the Moscow proletariat, sounded to me like a glorious hymn of life, life ever young, life perpetually renewed, never knowing death. Just imagine Timiryazev, all he has lived through, all that has gone through his mind, and now sitting down side by side with a Moscow textile worker and thinking how to build a new world, not on the ruins only of tsarist capitalist Russia, but on the ruins of that cultured Europe which fifty years ago when he first set foot in England no doubt appeared to him a model never to be reached.

Russia at that time was still dominated by the survivals of the rule of Nicholas I 'the Flogger.' The peasant was still a serf. In England the bourgeoisie had just done away with the remnants of aristocratic rule. They won to power by putting forward the principle of competition, of the struggle of each against each, as the leading principle of life. Darwin's monumental scientific research was a



great step forward to revolutionizing man's knowledge about man. Copernicus had put the earth in its place as just one of the planets. Lyell had ordered this little glow to develop itself. And then Darwin toppled man from lordship of the earth and reduced him to a mere stage in the development of life. Even this great revolutionary thought was seized on by the bourgeoisie as a weapon for the maintenance of its class domination, by a construing of the struggle for existence, as cause of evolution, into a justification of capitalism with all its horrors. At the beginning of Timiryazev's career capitalism was developing at such speed that any thought of another, non-capitalistic, order probably appeared to him a mere dream. Many glorious warriors of the Chartist movement, the first great liberating movement of the English workers, were then perishing in exile and penal servitude. The English working class, who once had followed those banners with enthusiasm, seemed to have forgotten not only their own dreams of freedom, but even the very names of the victims of their first great battle, of those who were executed, who perished in jails, who were serving terms of penal servitude in the South Australian penal colonies. They even forgot about the orphaned children of those men. The might of English capitalism released the workers out of the dark dens which once had filled the philanthropic souls of Dickens and Carlyle with horror. English workers became liberals and accepted faith in the permanence of capitalism.

I have not had the honour of making Clement Timiryazev's acquaintance and do not know how the intellect of this scientist viewed the rise of the European workers' movement, the epoch of the First International, what feelings were roused in him by the spectacle of Paris aflame in 1871, by the executions of the communards, by the establishment of German Social-Democracy, by the beginning of the heroic duel of the populist intelligentsia with the hydra of Russian tsarism. But even if this epoch did shake his faith in the everlasting

nature of the capitalist system, even if he did not consider the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat as a kind of infantile distemper, no doubt the long epoch of peaceful development of capitalism following 1871 convinced him that society was destined to develop by the same infinitesimal steady changes as those of organic nature, according to the biologists of the period—among whom he occupied so honourable a place. The social storm was invisible in the quiet laboratory of the biologist.

Even when the thunder of the Russian revolution of 1905 broke out, no doubt it seemed to Timiryazev that the most the storm would do would be to tear out the old and rotten roots of tsarism, and loosen the soil and give the young roots of bourgeois civilization a chance to develop. But the catastrophe of war broke suddenly over that 'civilized' Europe. This war which destroyed millions of human lives, took away the strongest and best, maimed millions physically and mentally, and left a trail of innumerable anæmic and rickety children, probably did not go to strengthen Timiryazev's faith in capitalism as the crowning system of human life. But Timiryazev could hardly have put much credence in the preaching of world revolution, begun on the very first day of the war by a handful of revolutionary 'cranks' such as 'doctrinaire' Lenin or that 'fanatic' Liebknecht. However, as year followed year and that capitalist civilization spat out fire upon its own children, burned down its magnificent cities and choked itself in blood, the aged scholar came to understand that in such bacchanalia the old capitalist world was going to its doom, and was worth no better fate.

Tsarism crashed, the first workers' revolution began—and won the day. It was born in blood, and poverty. It was like a cyclone which mowed down all that the eyes and intellect of the old scientist were accustomed to. The muddy raging torrent swept away houses, flooded the countryside. Even members of the intelligentsia who had spent years looking forward to the revolution in tsarist jails, in lonely exile and emigration,

averted their faces when it came. So many of them found the great Russian revolution only a suffocating nightmare.

In his quiet study aloof from the people, and forgotten by them, Timiryazev sat, ill, gazing through his window at the raging elements, which were breaking up the old world and endeavouring to build a new one on the ruins—which were the embodiment of the great constructive principles not only of the Russian revolution, but of the proletarian revolution of the whole world—these great principles which many considered to be merely the fevered delirium of the Russian Communists.

The old man across the dawn of whose life the fateful year of 1848 had flashed, who in his mature years witnessed the growing might of the bourgeoisie, now heard the wings of the spirit of the world revolution. In the flames of the revolution he discerned the foundation of a new world, and he became a communist. Timiryazev came out in defence of the slandered Russian revolution before a world in which his name was mentioned with respect and honour. Timiryazev held out his hand to the working class.

There is something stirring in this picture; an old man in the decline of life, an embodiment of the best of an epoch now at an end, able to understand the new and accept it and take it to his heart. Just think—old Plekhanov, who had spent his whole life learning how to serve the workers' revolution, and when it came turned his eyes away as from a Gorgon's head! But in the dreadful, bloody face of that revolution Timiryazev was able to recognize a mother giving birth to a new world.

Love of that life which never ends, which never ceases to go forward, must dwell in his heart, a love for which we, the generation bent to our gigantic task of new construction, shall inscribe his name in the golden book of great men of the revolution, and pass it on to future generations as that of a man who in his own person embodied life, as eternal struggle, eternal pain out of which ever springs new joy.

# SCIENCE GOES AHEAD

April, 1931

IN the Hall of Columns, where the Moscow proletariat commonly gathers for its most important conferences, where not so long ago the wreckers appeared before a proletarian court, sittings of the Congress of Institutes for Scientific Research are now being held to draw up their programme for research. Among a large number of young scientific workers are to be seen some of the older scientists with European reputations, and some prominent Soviet writers. The agenda is long. It ranges from consideration of the present situation of the institutes for scientific research to formulation of the basic problems which science must solve in order to accelerate the rate of development of the country's productive forces.

The Congress has not been organized well enough. But the mere fact that this Congress has become necessary and possible attests the greatness of our achievements. It also throws a light upon the vast spaces which lie ahead of us.

During the civil war, a time of famine and cold, Lenin paid the closest attention to the development of the Classon method of peat extraction. Not only did he himself go out to view the experiments, but he made a point of personally ensuring that Professor Classon received ample rations for his staff working on the construction of his machine. This particular technical task was granted hours, no, days of the time of the genius of the world proletarian revolution, because it gave promise of helping to overcome the fuel crisis.

Now we have thousands of scientific laboratories and institutes, and twenty-four thousand scientific workers pursuing science ahead. The very fact of the creation of so many scientific institutions raises the problem of administering

their work and the problem of establishing proper relations between them.

It is not a matter of simply registering facts. Hitherto scientific work has developed in a more or less unco-ordinated way. Laboratories have been organized either on the initiative of individual concerns or trusts in order to serve their particular needs, or by scientific institutions interested in broad general scientific work. That has resulted in scientific research running to two extremes. Either it has been confined to concrete needs of the moment, or it has become purely academic, taking up problems only because they interested the individual scientists, without any heed of current necessities and their interconnection. But our institutes of scientific research have continually had before them broad general questions arising from the concrete tasks our industry and agriculture are bent on solving. And the problem of determining which links are the most important for industrial and agricultural advance, came up before the scientific world of the Soviet Union. It was in this way that the problem of planning the development of scientific work was raised.

The international bourgeoisie either laughs at our attempts to 'plan everything' or it takes fright at the feared results of our system. There is a book called *The Red Trade Menace* (New York, 1931) by an American journalist, Mr H. R. Knickerbocker, which book, for all its pressman's tricks of able reporting of salient details, gives us a lively picture of the bourgeois lack of ability to grasp anything concerned with common human interests. The book laughs at the Bolsheviks as aiming (if they could) at planning every hour of the life of every one of the 162,000,000 Soviet citizens. Now, Bolsheviks do not run after Utopias of that kind. They merely take stock of the fact that the *planning of science has become an urgent and a decisive necessity*.

We are planning our economic development. What has

hitherto resulted from the elemental activities of scores of millions of people, largely in struggle against each other, is now to be achieved by their co-ordinated activities. We are able to do this because our proletariat now has all the productive forces of our country centred in its own hands. Therefore planning will result not merely in economic development but also in *socialist* development. In order to plan the economic development of all the different nationalities making up the Soviet Union, to plan the development of 162,000,000 people, it is necessary to plan the *development of applied science*. Our planning inevitably means not merely mastery of existing methods, but also their further unlimited development.

If bourgeois economic science and the bourgeois world generally has now passed from jeering at our planning of economy to trembling at its result, we can say that after ten more years of planned science in the U.S.S.R. the bourgeois world (or what remains of it) will be faced with the fact of the U.S.S.R.'s finally established general prosperity and enormous superiority in the field of applied science. The slogans 'Socialist industrialization' and 'Social reconstruction of rural economy' have now produced the slogan 'Mastery of applied science.'

For this mastery the planning of research itself is required. When Comrade Stalin launched that great slogan about mastering applied science it was also a slogan of preparation, preparation for the Second Five-Year Plan even before the first one was at an end. When Comrade Stalin launched that slogan he felt we were strong enough also to declare we had reached the point of passing from making the foundations of socialism to work on the great edifice itself.

One only needs to read the article of academician Joffe about the applied science of the future, and to ponder over the problems raised there, to be able to say to oneself 'Never did mankind set itself higher tasks', to feel proud of

the First Congress of Institutes for Scientific Research called for the planning of science itself.

None of those who attended the 1920 Congress of the Soviet when Comrade Krzhizhanovski demonstrated the plans of Goelro (the State Committee for the Electrification of Russia) and when, on a map spread before the delegates of the whole Soviet land, dressed in their peasant sheepskins through the acuteness of the fuel crisis (there was no heating in the hall), he turned on electric lights to indicate the points from which streams of electric energy would someday pour, can easily forget the scene. The 'intellectuals,' that breed of frail guts and puny brains, felt inwardly amused. Those of them that had a Bolshevik Party ticket in their pocket winked and said 'What a cunning rogue this Lenin is; he knows how to carry people through a time of starvation and cold with a dream.' And those who had come over from the hostile camp to the kind called 'loyal' went about mouthing 'Not electrification but electro-fiction.'

The construction of Goelro is well on the way. As we sit now in this same Hall of Columns, our thoughts turn to those who in ten more years will recall the great initiative of this Congress which is laying foundations for the harmonious victorious progress of science, not in the interests of the U.S.S.R. alone, but of the whole socialist future of all mankind.

The central task before our scientific workers is the struggle for natural science as the foundation of modern life. The relation of Marxism to natural science is determined by the fact that Marxism is both a science of society and a scientific conception of the world and life. As you read the first philosophical works of Marx, his victory over Feuerbach's materialism, you feel that this relationship, apt to be forgotten in the day to day struggle, is living, immediate. The Marxian scientific method, dialectical materialism, is a method applicable not only to social science. It is to revolu-

tionize natural science as well. It is only the fact that the social struggle is so acute and absorbs so much of our strength and energy that can keep us from feeling shame at our immense ignorance of the problems of science and the nature of life. Marx and Engels never lost contact with science. Engels was master of the most advanced science of his day, and with his intellect of genius endeavoured to make a synthesis which would overcome the one-sidedness of pure scientists with their poor reasoning and their lack of conception of the principle of contradiction in evolution.

Engels outlined a scheme of work for those generations of scientists who will be occupied with *the dialectical restatement of the findings of science*. In spite of the fact that Lenin had to spend an enormous amount of energy in the everyday struggle to create the Bolshevik Party, he was a true heir of Marx and Engels and could, so to speak, roll up his sleeves and do his fair share of work in the realm—otherwise foreign to him—of natural science. Overcoming enormous difficulties, he not only acquainted himself with what was going on in that enchanted world, but he also found in that widening of his knowledge further means for struggle against a conception of that world outside our daily tasks which was finding its way into the proletarian party. And the power of Lenin's intellect is felt in his book against the Machists no less than in the letters by which he ideologically organized the uprising of the Russian proletariat. And whoever compares his *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* with Friedrich Adler's book on Mach's teaching—and Adler was by education a physicist—is bound to feel the difference, even in this seemingly distant field, between the mental range of the leader of the world's greatest revolution and that of a petty 'socialist' mouthpiece of the lesser bourgeoisie.

Natural science and Marxism are closely inter-related. There is no such thing as a Marxist world-outlook which does not at any new stage of development of society or science



struggle to obtain a picture of the world based upon the latest discoveries of natural science and to master natural science in a dialectical way.

Marxism merely has not been able hitherto to devote sufficient energy to the problems of natural science. It has addressed itself to these problems only in the persons of its greatest teachers—Marx, Engels and Lenin. The proletariat has been engaged in forming its shock battalions, all its energies have been devoted to the struggle against the bourgeoisie. Marxian intellectual forces have been directed to the illumination of the problems of this social struggle. Even the leading Marxists of the proletariat have not yet mastered dialectically the enormous accumulated material of natural science, or effected in that field a transformation such as Marx brought about in economic theory. That is because until 1917, as an exploited class, they had no admittance to the laboratory-workshops of science. They had no trained people able to devote themselves to those tasks. Thus they could not view them as practical tasks. To master natural science dialectically it was first of all necessary to complete the seizure of power, the defeating of intervention, and the initial tasks of economic reconstruction.

Just as in the economic field, the proletariat approaches the task of research in the field of natural science as one of first restoring that part of the bourgeois remains which is usable. The first period of the New Economic Policy was a period of collecting scientists together, of re-establishing the old scientific institutes, of marking out new tasks, of recruiting and training future leaders. Young men and women whose schooling had been limited to civil war, to how to conquer the bourgeoisie, came at last to the school bench to master one of the greatest means of social reconstruction—natural science. But just as the reconstruction period of the new economic polity did not re-establish economy with the old proportions, not to speak of the old basis, just as much had to be dis-

carded and much reorganized—so had scientific work too to be reorganized; and then many of the old scientists proved incapable of serving the creation of the new world, or, more than incapable, even proved hostile to it.

When this period of restoration and renewal of activity was over a new task became clear to us, a task of which the old scientists could not even dream—the total reconstruction of science. We are still struggling both in economics and in science with the very primitive tasks of utilizing the old. We are still yearning for our wide masses to attain mere literacy, but in the quiet of our laboratories the minds of our scientists are already busy utilizing the forces awakened by the revolution. They see the enormous possibilities which the revolution has laid bare for them, and they are thinking and planning boldly. As academician Joffe said in an article which should literally shake the very fibre of every man capable of envisaging the nature of future developments ‘The problem of utilizing solar energy has to be solved and it will be solved.’

What does that mean? On the agenda of to-day or of the coming decade the revolution has put the question it was born to raise, the problem of man’s achieving final and complete dominion over nature.

Labour is ‘the first basic condition of human existence and that is so true that in a certain sense we may say that labour has created man himself’ (Engels’ *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 89; Russian edition). But what is labour? ‘Labour, in the first place is a process in which both man and Nature participate and in which man of his own accord starts, regulates and controls the material reactions between himself and Nature. He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to appropriate Nature’s productions in a form adapted to his wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature’ (Marx: *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 198; Kerr edition). But

man enters the struggle against Nature not singly. 'All production is appropriation of Nature by the individual within and through a definite form of society.' (Marx: *Critique of Political Economy (Introduction to)*; Kerr edition, p. 273.)

The first fight man engaged in with Nature was that of packs searching to find a way out of the realm of the beasts. In the struggle against Nature he organized himself into a primitive communist society. The victories over the forces of Nature achieved by this classless society increased the productivity of labour to such an extent that society was able to split into classes. Part appropriated the results of the victory over Nature of the other part, and shifted the difficulties of this struggle on to it. Since that time the history of mankind has been a history of struggle between classes. The development of technique, that great weapon in the struggle against Nature, is accomplished on the basis of social labour, but the dominating and exploiting class not only annexes for itself the fruits of this development, but permits only as much development as its interests require. Modern natural science was originated and developed during the struggle of the young bourgeoisie against feudalism. The scientists who advanced it rarely realized the social significance of their conquests. When Bacon pursued science as a basis for inventions, he, Chancellor of Queen Elizabeth, did not realize that he was undermining the old feudal order and preparing the way for domination by the bourgeoisie. The great Newton was a religious man, but the work of his mind was evoked by the necessities of the young bourgeoisie who did not fear to advance the struggle against Nature, even though it meant overthrowing the feudal system and the church.

Were there a scientific history of philosophy and natural science we should have a grand picture which would show how all the philosophic discussions prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century originated out of general problems, which were the result of the struggle of natural science to

solve the problem formulated so clearly by Bacon, and put before science by the early capitalist class. In the materialistic philosophy of the eighteenth century we find the clearest expression not only of the attempt of the young bourgeoisie to wrest from Nature its secrets, but of their deep conviction that victories over Nature would bring happiness to all mankind. The philosophy of the materialists of the eighteenth century breathes the same conscious optimism as inspires the scientific writings of the founders of bourgeois economics. 'Does not the hired labourer now live better than the kings of the Middle Ages?' asked Adam Smith. No matter that this optimism was unfounded. It expressed the faith the bourgeoisie had in the future.

The decline of bourgeois philosophy after the death of Hegel was a result from the fear the bourgeoisie now had of solving those great problems. Whereas up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the search for the order of Nature took precedence of the social problem, and whereas philosophy could then split into idealism and materialism in its attempt to solve the problems of Nature, since the development of the productive forces of capitalism began to lead to crises, and created the two nations—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—the philosopher and the scientist have had their path barred by the social sphinx with its query: 'Whither capitalist society?' And having regard to the constant rumbling underground, the glow of the July days of the year 1848, the bombardment of Paris by the Versailles forces, science was afraid to answer the question and averted its gaze from the face of the sphinx.

It is only now when we no longer fear the question, 'Whither the development of social forces?' only now when we can give a joyous answer to our millions of hearers, only now when academician Joffe can write: 'Socialism brings not only new social relations, but also a new method, in comparison with which the old methodology is pitiful babble. There is a gap

between science and technique. New possibilities opened up by science have frequently taken twenty or thirty years for realization, and the great problems whose solution would revolutionize our methods of production were not tackled at all, and could not be attacked and solved under the conditions of capitalist society. They are waiting for socialism, and together with socialism they will come to life'—it is only now that the slogan of 'Plan science to conquer Nature' is no phrase, but the beginning of a great task.

The tasks before the social sciences are, of course, not exhausted. Marxism has conquered only the basic principles. The method of Marx, Engels and Lenin awaits application to all the history of mankind, to all its outstanding questions, to throw light upon them, to make the social sciences the property of the masses.

The social revolution is as it were a huge tower from which the view is much clearer than in Marx's day. He looked upon a capitalism still developing, and gave a brilliant analysis of its moving forces. We see capitalism in a stage of decay and convulsions. And just as cracks in the earth's crust caused by earthquakes enable geologists to study the geological processes of the history of the earth better, so the cracks which have appeared in capitalism allow us to see its workings better.

Science has accumulated a vast amount of new material in the field of social phenomena which has yet to be worked over by the materialistic method. But materialist dialectics are not something petrified, they grow more concrete, they improve, by the new material worked on. Marxism has to solve a great number of old social problems in the light of new experience, and other problems which did not come before it formerly, or which are now arising in a new form. Leninism is a new stage of development of Marxism in all fields, for it is Marxism applied to the epoch of socialist revolution. The struggle taking place to raise Marxism in all fields of social science to the highest Leninist stage, a struggle which has been taking

place in a series of scientific discussions of recent years, can only be something artificial, accidental and alien to people who do not understand the mutations which take place in history. Whatever be the exaggerations, the errors, in the course of this struggle, we are ascending by way of it to the highest stage of Marxist-Leninist consciousness.

But history is moving forward and raising new problems. The Marxian Social and Natural Sciences are facing mighty tasks, not only in the countries of decaying capitalism, but here also with us. On the horizon there already looms a great task, which in the future will become the main task: Marxian Natural Science, that is a system of natural science proceeding from the unity of Nature, and its development in contradictions and by contradictions, which is to solve the great task of finally subordinating Nature to man.

At present we are striving to eliminate the remnants of classes in the U.S.S.R. and to form a classless society. This later task will be fought out on a world scale.

But now, in order to accomplish the task of meeting the growing necessities of the hundreds of millions who wish not only to eat bread and butter or pork, or to be well dressed, to have a decent house, but who in the remotest villages want to hear wireless and live a civilized life—in order to realize all this, though we have not yet completed the task of fully conquering Marxian Social Science, we have to take up the great task of conquering the natural sciences and to solve the basic problems of mankind, the conquest of Nature by man.

In the Hall of Columns speeches have been heard on problems never before spoken of at great public meetings—the profoundest problems of physics and chemistry. Much of it, to our sorrow, we politicians and social workers, illiterate in natural science, do not understand. For our children the understanding of it will be obligatory. Before acceptance into the Party ten years hence people will be asked not only why

Lenin in 1903 fought against Martov and Axelrod for the first paragraph of the Party statutes, but also whether there is a grain of materialism in Einstein's theory of relativity, and if so in what does it consist?

And so we people of the older generation, sitting in the Hall of Columns, rejoice for the coming generation, which will master the great science of Nature and put it at the service of all mankind. Having written this I offer my apologies for my words 'coming generation.' To postpone it to the 'coming generation' would undoubtedly be 'right deviation.' To master science is the duty of the generation now going into battle. The slogan 'Overtake and surpass the world in applied science' is the slogan of the coming ten years, and I am profoundly convinced that it will be carried into deed.

# SHOCK-BRIGADERS

## I. 'U.S.S.R., LTD. MASS PRODUCTION OF HEROES'

OGIZ (The State Publishing House) some time ago published an album of photographs entitled *Udarniks*. This was followed by another album called *The Country Must Know its Heroes*, and by still another, *Shock-workers of the Countryside*. There are also some three dozen picture post cards of outstanding shock-workers, men and women.

I happened to be poring over these collections and studying the faces of our shock-workers, when a Soviet writer I know came in to see me—one of those 'almost a communist.' He took the album out of my hand, glanced at it, and then put it down.

'What's all this, mass production of standard heroes, eh?' was all he had to say.

'Yes,' I answered, 'Mass production of heroes. Were you born yesterday? Weren't you in the civil war? Didn't you see masses of heroes born? Could we ever have conquered without masses of heroes?'

He said, 'Yes, but that was war, the sacrifice of blood.'

I said, 'Now you've said it. You were taught to see heroism only in battle, and pay all possible tribute to Ilovaisky. A communist must be able to take arms in hand and seize power, and with arms in hand defend that power—that sort of thing. But the main work of a communist is not fighting; it is a complete rebuilding of human society from the foundation upward. And it is the mass of the common people, under the leadership of the Party who are doing that. It is a task of unheard-of severity, and in the struggle to accomplish it, mass heroes are made. Yes, sir, the U.S.S.R. *is* a workshop for the mass-production of heroes, but it's a new kind of mass



production, it's mass production without any standardization. Just take a proper look at these albums and cards.'

'Yes,' my friend answered me half-heartedly. 'The faces are very varied.'

I said, 'And not only their faces. These people are of all kinds, their previous lives have been different, these heroes of lathe or plough obviously have come from various strata of our population. You people very seldom meet workers, but if you writers, who in the bottom of your hearts are one with Goethe in valuing individuality as the greatest attribute of man, would only take the trouble to study the short biographies of shock-workers published by our Press, if you were to read the biographies of the shock-workers whose photographs you hold in your hand, you would see what a complex process it is that gives birth to masses of heroes. You would see what a variety of individuals this process crystallizes out, and you would look at this question of heroes and the masses which the Russian intelligentsia has for fifty years found so diverting in an entirely different way.'

But the devil take these Russian intellectuals and their eternal problem of the conflict between heroism and 'the masses.' Let us try to understand for ourselves without 'intellectual' aid what these shock-workers are, and whence they come.

## II. THE VARIOUS SERIES OF OUR 'MASS-PRODUCED' SHOCK-WORKERS

### (a) *Secret political ('underground') shock-workers*

Now those old 'underground' Party workers were shock-workers, if ever there was such a thing. Only an insignificant number of them have ever been singled out. There has been

little sale of photographs of them. I am thinking of the old officers of the Party—those workers and intellectuals, who entered the revolutionary movement while still young, and gave their blood to feed the lice in the barracks and inns on the road to Siberia. For years and decades they cherished thought of the moment when the working class would overthrow the tsar and the bourgeoisie, and some of them lived to see the day. During the civil war they commanded regiments, divisions, armies, they led grain campaigns, they organized the workers and the peasants, and, when the civil war ended, the Party put them to work restoring or creating our industries. That was perhaps the hardest task of all. Even those who had once worked in factories generally knew only some small part of some one production process, they had never touched the business side, never directed a whole industry. In the past the capitalists did not recruit their factory managers from among our Party agitators. So these secret political workers now had to study engineering and administration from top to bottom, they had to master hundreds of problems of which they formerly had no idea. What labour all this meant! About the stress and strain of it we think only when one of the old guard dies. Then at the crematorium or in the House of Union old friends meeting at his funeral shake their heads and say that it should not be, the burden of work ought to be lightened. But as soon as the last echoes of the 'International' die away, off they rush in their cars to further series of meetings and tasks.

People do not count these men and women as shock-workers. That is so to speak what they are for. It is only recently that somebody had the wits to think of publishing a poster showing photographs of members of the Central Committee and call it 'The Shock-Brigade of the Proletariat.'

(b) *The 1917 Generation*

Now we come to the generation which took up the great fight in 1917, received its baptism of fire in October, and passed the test of the civil war. This generation produced a great number of shock-workers. They are not all managers of factories. Among them are many rank and file workers—men and women who fought in the civil war, then came back to their job—folk without much to say, no propagandists, but who love their work. That is why they got rather overlooked during the time of the New Economic Policy. But during those years of re-establishing the old industries they accumulated a great deal of practical experience. Some of them retired into their shells, grew indifferent and dropped out of the front ranks of public life. But when the first great struggles for the Five-Year Plan began, when great hammers began to drive in the foundation-piles of socialism, many workers of that category once more became enthusiastic and came back to the fight. Once again you might catch in the newspapers the forgotten name of some glorious fighter of the civil war. Sometimes civil-wartime friends who had long lost touch met again through this roll-call of shock-workers.

(c) *Old Industrial Workers*

Now comes a third group which is of exceptional interest. It produced most of the shock-workers written up in the papers, and whose photos we see. Most of these shock-workers are the older non-Party workers or else they may have joined the Party in 1927-28. Their working experience ranges from twenty-five to forty years. There are even some older still. They took no direct part in the revolutionary move-

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ment before 1917, but later, after the civil war, they stood staunchly by the Soviet Government, though they took no part in public work. Now such folk are in leading positions, instructors of whole factories. Whoever has visited our factories in recent years will have had the experience of seeing Y.C.L. youngsters, in the course of some meeting, drag some bespectacled old fellow forward, some stooping, venerable figure, and present him as 'Our Vassili Ivanovich, a real heart of oak, our best worker, has made such and such a number of new proposals, has organized such and such shock-brigades. But still we shall catch him up and show him.'

The old man usually utters some indistinct sounds and tries to escape. He is certain to be elected to the committee, and he sits down at the table and listens attentively, with his arms stretched in front of him over the table.

Why were these workers who now play such a tremendous part not in the front ranks at the beginning of the revolution? They were workers in whom even capitalism could not destroy man's natural love of the work they were obliged to do. They were the best fitters at the works, the best workers on the looms, the sort of men who would always be working out little gadgets and improvements in the home. They would be made into foremen, and then they were lost to the working class. They were the producers of innumerable technical improvements. Capitalism made use of their inventions, but gave them neither glory nor honour.

I knew workers of that kind in Germany. They read engineering journals, but not working-class papers. Other workers used to say of that sort of man, 'Er bastelt,' that is, 'He is always fiddling about at some gadget or other.' But now, for these workers, at the end of their life a great time has come. Now they understand that their knowledge and experience are of tremendous importance to the country, and they are zealous at their work no longer for themselves, or a bonus, but to set the great work of the whole people

going. Only now do they believe in the possibility of socialism and in its great significance. Only now have they come to appreciate the worth of those whom they once considered merely loud-mouthed bawlers. And they try not merely to get the former energy out of their old muscles, not merely to find in their brains some technical method of overcoming or obviating some troublesome breakdown, but also to understand all the great changes taking place around them. They become one with the political army of the proletariat. In all that concerns ability to work, they are the backbone of the shock-worker movement and they are our pride.

(d) *Worker and Peasant Youth*

But naturally they are not our future. Our future is with the young generation of workers and peasants, those to whom the revolution has opened wide the doors to knowledge, and who are now learning to build and in building are learning.

If all technical books become immediately 'out of print,' if there are in the land eighty thousand subscribers for such a magazine as *At the Helm*, if there are hundreds of thousands of subscribers to wireless publications, all that comes from the army of youth which is endeavouring to master science and its application, which forms the Y.C.L. brigades and has in all truth made common labour an honourable and a glorious task. Out of this youth will come the great ranks of builders who will complete the building of socialism. From them will gush a mighty torrent of great inventions. They it is who are to accomplish the technical revolution conceived in the womb of capitalism but which we, and we alone, can complete.

Victory does not come easy to this youth. They lack that general grounding which alone makes higher study easy. They have difficulty in mastering higher mathematics but they

do master them. There are no more packed audiences than those of the technical universities and night schools, where no other language is known than that of 1918—the language of attack, the language of supreme daring. These are not the wild Y.C.L. intellectuals of 1918-1919, full of talk about revolution and tossing of shaggy locks. These are people who don't even speak too well, but who are tenacious, energetic, concrete-minded folk, who will never admit that they are unable to master any task.

I saw some of the older ones of this generation, some of our very youngest engineers, in a very important factory from which some forty wrecker-engineers had to be removed. The plant was left in the hands of those young engineers. Those youths never for a moment took advantage of their advancement, did not forget their lack of experience, their insufficient knowledge, the great responsibility laid upon them. Not only did they work with the greatest zeal to overcome their difficulties, but they took turns at doing night duty with the Y.C.L. watchmen so that in case of damage they could not be reproached with 'an oversight.' That young generation now sets the example in our factories.

We now begin to see the same young generation in the villages—those who go back to the country after service in the Red Army. In the towns they have seen the miracles of modern engineering; in the Red Army they have studied discipline and learned to read and write. In the villages the young generation just leaving school meets them half way. These young people poke about round the tractors and new farm-machinery and strive to learn every secret of the machinery. They are able to take the place of tractorists, loaned from the towns, and in other ways too they further the industrialization of the countryside. Out of their ranks come real organizers.

This generation, which entered adult life five or six years ago, will carry our banner to final victory.

Take a look at their faces among the photos of shock workers.

Wide foreheads, eyes that look out at you with deep faith and decision, with self-confidence. These are the real conquerors of the world.

(e) *The 'National Minorities'*

Among these youthful shock-workers there is a special current which consists of the national minorities. I do not need to speak here of the famous Jewish shock-workers. I am thinking of the younger generation I saw several years ago in the towns of White Russia using their last halfpennies to buy Moscow newspapers, and thinking sad thoughts of the Soviet industry which was growing, but growing elsewhere—for they were then unemployed.

Co-operation had destroyed the retail business on which the life of their parents had been built. Handicrafts were suffering because of lack of raw materials. Industry could not take them in, and they would dream of becoming metal-workers just as once upon a time young nobles dreamed of becoming knights. The rapid pace of industrialization put them on their feet. They pooled their resources, and went into factories and mines. There was no labour they did not take up, and zealously too. They had to suffer from the anti-Semitism of newly arrived workers from the countryside, and prove their right to the title 'proletarian.' And they proved it. But though their physical weakness may have been a handicap, they brought to industry the intellect of the townsman, and the civilized ways of the old handicraftsmen.

There was considerably more difficulty for workers from backward, less-developed nations—for the Tartar, Turki, and Chuvash workers. But these workers have also given us thousands of heroic shock-workers who have fought with the

greatest firmness, I might even say savagely, for the conquest of socialism. The greater their nation's cultural backwardness, the more intensely have they worked, to show that they could be among the first. National rivalry, which formerly led to national hatred and pogroms, was now a source of a great soaring of productivity, in the furnace of which whole detachments of proletarians have been made from the nationalities which never before knew a proletariat.

The role which National minority free development plays as a source of revolutionary productivity is also played by the liberation of women.

*(f) Women Workers*

The revolution gave equal rights to women workers, but at first this could only be a legal equality. Indeed a woman worker is not equal yet, she bears a load of household cares, and she still has to contend with the difficulty that the older generation of workers do not consider a woman an equal. This puts our young woman workers on their mettle and pushes them forward into the ranks of shock-workers.

Some days ago I was witness of the following scene. The manager of a works telephoned for one of the foremen to take me round and show me the plant. A young woman of twenty-six or so came in. She looked me and my companions up and down, and then asked scornfully, 'Are you the party of trippers?' The manager did not know her, she had not been at the factory long.

'Do you think you will be able to explain the process of production?' he asked.

Fire flashed in her eyes.

'Why not? I am a forewoman.'

We went into one of the shops and I asked her who she was. It appeared that she had worked at the Zinoviev Paper Mill



in Leningrad. For shock-work she was promoted and then sent to a technical school. She graduated. Now she was working as a forewoman in the chemical shop of the Balakhno Paper Mills.

This young generation of women shock-workers will win equality for women workers, an equality that they have won by their whole lives, as all the women in the ranks of the shock-workers may say, 'Our whole life has been heroism.' Look at that photo of a worker from the Lepse factory—S. J. Grishkevitch. It is the most soul-stirring photo of a factory shock-worker I have ever seen. Her face is like the hand of an old washer-woman, steeped hundreds of times in soap and soda, a hand on which every fibre and vein stands out separately. It is a face which has seen thousands of sleepless nights, when after a day of heavy toil this woman had to mend her children's clothes until far into the night. As she looked at her work her eyes must often have been dimmed by heavy thoughts of what to give the family to eat to-morrow. The heroism of women workers was always an embittered heroism, because their lot was to help their menfolk stand the burden of need and poverty. They were cooped up in a stuffy kitchen, their lives were spent among the noise of crying children. They used to stand at the door of the bar and wait till their husband had sufficiently drowned his sorrow in vodka. Now they have found a purpose, have realized what their services mean to society. That is why the expressions of so many women shock-workers are so clear and bright.

### *(g) The Old Experts as Shock-Workers*

Now we come to shock-workers from the least promising medium of all: the stratum of pre-revolution experts. We pilloried the wreckers before the whole working class. Now we are in duty bound to report also to the working class the

signs of heroism, energy and perseverance under difficulties of those engineers who have kept step with us all along or who have now turned to us. Their life is not easy, even though the working class does intuitively spot the people devoted to it, and surround them with esteem and love. The case is known of a great engineer really devoted to us and in whom we did have full faith, but who committed suicide from fear that he was not trusted. No good is served by hiding such facts. This engineer fell as a victim for the revolution, a victim which should arrest our attention and cause us to surround with love those representatives of the pre-revolutionary skilled intellectuals who have entered unreservedly into the service of the working class. They help us to save hundreds of millions. They help us to turn the thousands of young experts—shock-workers—into future leaders of industry.

### *(h) Foreign Experts*

Finally, we must not forget the foreign experts who are beginning to play their part in our furious work. Not only must we remember them, but we must also pay them the greatest attention.

There come from abroad to work with us engineers looking for good salaries, engineer-creators looking for greater scope for their work, and engineers seeking a new fatherland. These are disillusioned in the old ideals of the bourgeois world and are asking themselves whether a better world is not likely to arise with us. From among the engineer 'patriots of technique' and those searching for a new ideology are recruited our foreign engineer shock-workers. If we realize that in this group can be found builders of socialism, if we help them find their way among the great problems that to-day confront the world, we shall see them turn into a rich source of engineering initiative and energy.

*Foreign Workers*

I do not speak of foreign workers. Not all of them are shock-workers. Many of them too come here only in order to earn a living. This is the most greedy part of the foreign workers. They will either have to be remade or rejected. But still there are already some hundreds who are devoting themselves to our affairs with all their energy. Of those I shall write a special study.

*Heroes versus Masses, or a Mass of Heroes*

Capitalism is built on private property. Therefore it is built upon individualism, therefore it has developed the cult of the great individual and therefore it has produced a philosophy of history to show that history is made by great individuals.

The Populist movement, which was a bourgeois democratic current, was in the last analysis essentially a bourgeois current. That was why it had to rest upon subjectivism, and found its final expression in terrorist acts—in a cult of the hero avenging the nation.

Throughout the whole course of its history Marxism has fought against this ideology, opposing to it the view of social development as a result of the struggle of class forces generated by the development of production. From that the Populists used to conclude that we deny the significance of individuality.

And no doubt my friend, the fellow traveller-writer who spoke disdainfully about the 'mass production of standard heroes' also thought: 'So it's come to that at last, has it, you need heroes and so you begin to turn them out in masses.' But anybody who thinks like that shows that he does not

know anything of Marxism. Neither for Marx nor for Lenin did the masses consist of a sum of equal units. And history for them was not the struggle of a homogeneous nameless mass. In the masses there are backward strata and advanced. In the masses a great role is played by the average person who follows the advance guard.

If this were not so, why did we create a party, an organization of advanced workers, to prepare the way of the working class and peasantry to victory?

As long as mankind exists it will produce a vanguard which struggles in advanced positions for a solution to the problems which history puts before mankind. There have been and there still are heroes, but their heroism is nothing but an expression of the strivings of the masses, their heroism can lead to victory only by becoming mass heroism, only by raising the masses to their level.

Twenty-eight years ago Rosa Luxemburg wrote: 'The historical task of leaders is to make themselves unnecessary.' But they can become unnecessary only in respect of this or that given task of history. As history puts forward new tasks, new advanced groups become necessary.

The measure of the intensity of revolution is the scale upon which it can develop advanced men and women. The great proof of the truly socialist character of our revolution is the very fact that it produces whole classes and whole masses of heroes, that it generates mass enthusiasm.

All the contemptible Kautskys and Hilferdings, who declare that the shock movement is produced by tyranny, show by this opinion that they are quite incapable of conceiving what the social revolution is. Our revolution is socialist just because it does generate shock-workers. It is the goal before us that has produced our shock-workers on a mass scale. Our aim now is to raise all workers to the level of shock-workers, to make all labour a matter of valour and honour.

The accomplishment of this will mean creation of socialist

society. In order to accelerate this final victory of socialism we must surround the shock-workers movement with love and glory. We must acquaint the country with the life of shock-workers, we must see to it that the title of shock-worker becomes the most honourable title possible in the eyes of every worker and peasant. We are only just getting to work on this. We have begun with the pamphlet publication of autobiographies of shock-workers, but they have not yet been read by the widest masses, though to the future historian of socialism, there will be no more interesting material than these biographies of the real builders of socialism.

Our newspapers still approach this important business somewhat carelessly. They do not seem to be able to portray our shock-workers in all their variety, in all their individualized beauty. Nor has our literature so far created any unforgettable shock-worker characters.

But all this must be done, and these State Publishing House albums deserve the greatest attention, the most attentive approach and analysis.





